三国志 ③

漢室の風雲

横山光輝

希望コミックス 18

JUST SOME EXTRA NOTES THAT SOME PEOPLE MIGHT FIND HELPFUL IN UNDERSTANDING THE STORY THAT I TOOK FROM WIKIPEDIA.

LI: TRADITIONAL CHINESE UNIT OF DISTANCE, 1 LI = 0.5KM (APPROX.)
CATTY: TRADITIONAL CHINESE UNIT OF MASS, 1 CATTY = 600GRAMS (APPROX.)

ADMINISTRATIVE DIVISIONS OF CHINA DURING HAN DYNASTY

LEVEL 1: PROVINCE. THE LARGEST ADMINISTRATIVE DIVISION. THE NAMES FOR PROVINCES ALL END WITH ZHOU WHICH LITERALLY MEANS PROVINCE.
(EX. YOUZHOU, YIZHOU, QINGZHOU)

LEVEL 2: COMMANDERY, SECOND LARGEST AFTER PROVINCES.

LEVEL 3: COUNTY, COMES AFTER COMMANDERY. I MIGHT MISTAKENLY TRANSLATE THIS AS PREFECTURE SOMETIMES.

SO BASICALLY, TOWNS -> COUNTIES -> COMMANDERIES -> PROVINCES -> HAN CHINA

SANGOKUSHI

3

THE STATE OF AFFAIRS OF THE HAN COURT

YOKOYAMA MITSUTERU

ZHANG FEI YIDE

SANGOKUSHI
(ROMANCE OF THE
THREE KINGDOMS)

三国志

VOLUME 03
THE STATE OF AFFAIRS
OF THE HAN COURT

DEATH OF GENERAL HE JIN 7

THE WANDERING 39

THE TEN ATTENDANTS 87

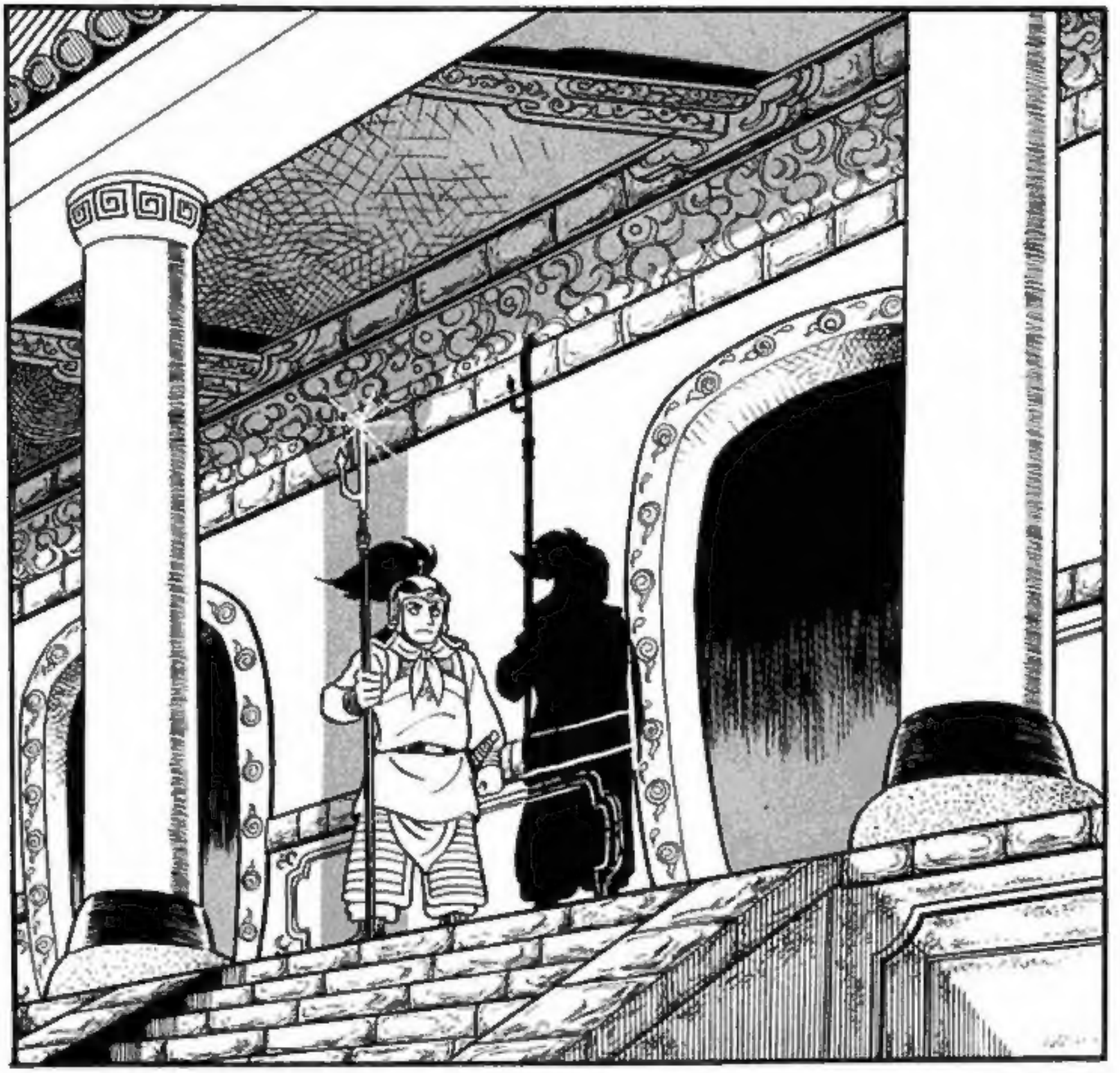
OMEN OF CHAOS 127

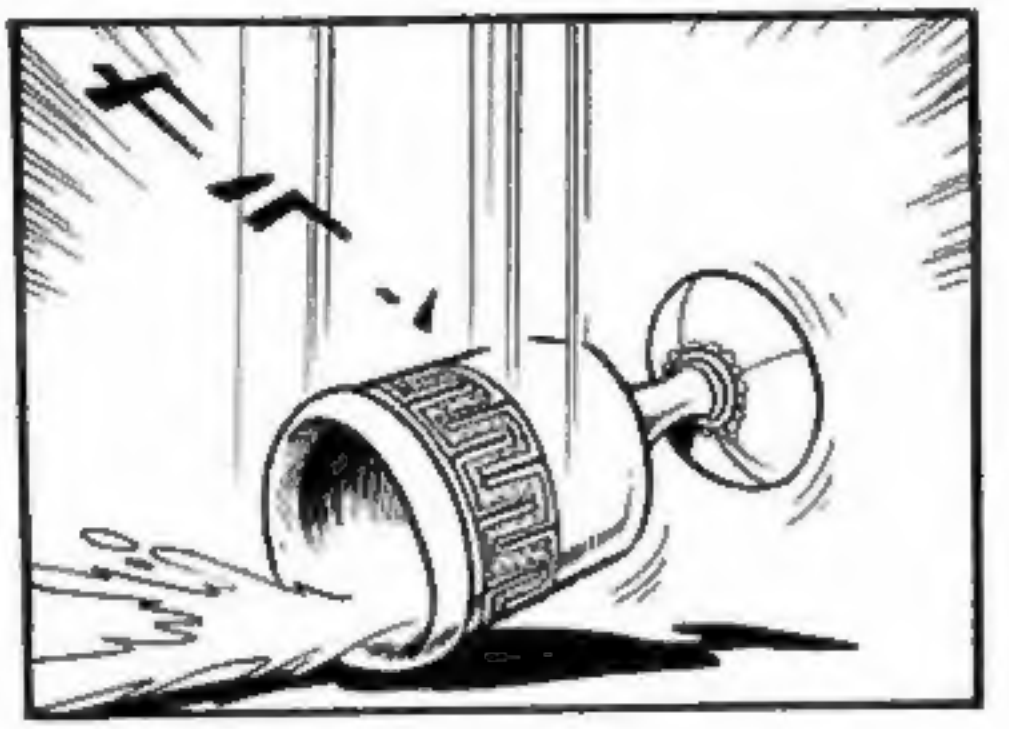
IMPERIAL MESSENGER 168

TABLE OF CONTENTS

〔月刊『希望の友』掲載〕

THE TEN ATTENDANTS





WHAT A MAN HE IS... WITH JUST HIS VOLUNTEER ARMY OF 500MEN AND MY 3000 SOLDIERS, HE MANGAED TO ANNHILATE THE ENEMY FORCES NUMBERING IN TENS OF THOUSANDS...

NO SIR. LIU BEI IS NOW HEADING BACK AFTER HIS VICTORY.

THIS ISN'T JUST SOME DISINFOR-MATION?

EVEN THOUGH WE HAVE FAILED COUNTLESS OF TIMES IN TRYING TO TAKE THAT IRON GATE GUARDED BY THE GENERAL OF THE LAND, ZHANG BAO.

IT SEEMS THAT LIU BEI DID NOT ATTACK THROUGH THE IRON GATE DIRECTLY, BUT RATHER LAUNCHED A SURPRISE ATTACK FROM BEHIND.

JUST HOW DID HE MANAGE TO DISPEL ZHANG BAO'S SORCERY?

YES, HE MANAGED TO SCALE THOSE CLIFFS SUCC-ESSFULLY.

FROM BEHIND... Y-YOU MEAN FROM THOSE STEEP CLIFFS!?

THE YELLOW SCARF REBELS NEVER IMAGINED THAT THE ENEMY COULD POSSIBLY ATTACK FROM THERE, AND SO THEY THOUGHT IT WAS THEIR OWN SIDE REVOLTING INSTEAD.

THAT'S AN IDEA THAT NOBODY EVER DARED TO THINK BEFORE.

TO BE ABLE TO SCALE SUCH DAN-GEROUS CLIFFS...

DISTRUSTING THEIR OWN COMRADES, AND SURROUNDED BY THE GROWING FIRE, THEY WERE ANNHILATED.

WHAT?

GENERAL ZHU JUN, A MESSEN-GER FROM QUYANG HAS COME.

IT IS GOOD NEWS, GENERAL.

A MESSENGER FROM QUYANG? HAS SOMETHING HAPPENED?

AND SHORTLY AFTER, GENERAL OF THE PEOPLE, ZHANG LIANG WAS ALSO ANNHILATED BY OUR FORCES.

THE REBEL FORCES IN QUYANG HAVE LOST THEIR LEADER ZHANG JIAO, WHO PASSED AWAY DUE TO ILLNESS.

YES, GENERAL. AND SO I WAS SENT HERE TO REPORT ON THE CURRENT STATUS ON THIS SIDE OF THE BATTLEFIELD.

W-WHAT! YOU MEAN TO SAY THAT GENERALS DONG ZHUO AND HUANGFU SONG HAVE DESTROYED THE REMAINING REBELS!?

REPORT BACK THAT GENERAL ZHU JUN HAS BEATEN THE REMAINING REBELS AND THAT THIS REBELLION IS NOW OVER.

YES, SIR. I SHALL QUICKLY REPORT BACK THIS JOYOUS NEWS.

HAHAHA, WORRY NOT. OUR FORCES HERE HAVE ALSO KILLED GENERAL OF THE LAND, ZHANG BAO, AND ALL HIS FORCES.

WITH THIS, MY PROMOTION IS GURANTEED.

HAHA, YOU NEVER KNOW HOW ONE'S LUCK WILL TURN OUT.

WHEW, IF I HAD STILL BEEN STUCK HERE FIGHTING IT OUT WITH THE REBELS, I WOULD HAVE SURELY BEEN DEMOTED AND REPLACED BY ANOTHER.

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THAT LIU BEI IS SURELY A BRINGER OF GOOD LUCK!

IF THAT YOUNG MAN LIU BEI HAD NEVER HAPPENED TO COME HERE, I WOULD HAVE BEEN MARKED AS A USELESS INCOMPETENT GENERAL.

AS I EXPECTED FROM YOU, YOU ARE TRULY AN EXCEPTIONAL MAN!

OHH, LIU BEI! I HAVE HEARD OF YOUR VICTORY!

WHAT A FICKLE MAN HE IS.

I HAVE OTHER GOOD NEWS TO TELL YOU. BUT FIRST, LET US HAVE A DRINK TO YOUR SUCCESS.

YES. GENERALS DONG ZHUO AND HUANGFU SONG HAVE SCORED A HUGE VICTORY AND WITH OUR VICTORY HERE, THE REBELLION HAS COME TO AN END AT LAST.

SO THE REBELS HAVE REALLY ALL BEEN DEFEATED?

NOW, DRINK TO YOUR HEART'S CONTENT! WE SHALL VICTORIOUSLY MARCH TO THE CAPITAL TOMORROW!

NOW THE PEOPLE MAY FINALLY LIVE IN PEACE AGAIN.
SO THE BATTLE IS FINALLY OVER.

FOR 7 DAYS AND 7 NIGHTS, THE CAPITAL LUOYANG CELEBRATED THE VICTORY. THE STREETS WERE LIT BY THE LAMPS AND THE SKIES, BY FIREWORKS

SINGING,

DRINKING,

AND THE PEOPLE'S LAUGHTER FILLED THE STREETS

DONG
ZHUO

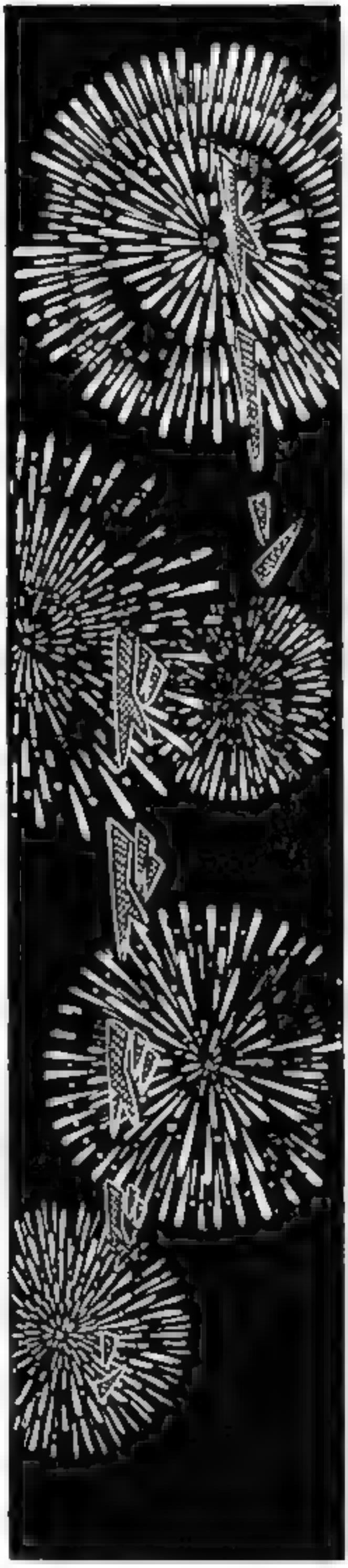
HUA
NG FU
SONG

THE ROARING CHEERS
OF THE PEOPLE
AWAITED THE HAN
FORCES RETURNING
TO THE CAPITAL.

帥
ZHU RU N

AND THE
OTHERS

CAO
CAO



YES, IT SEEMS EVERYONE IS AS HAPPY AS THEY COULD BE.
BROTHER, THE CITIZENS INSIDE THE CITY ARE CELEBRATING TO THEIR HEART'S CONTENT.

WHY ARE WE NOT ALLOWED TO ENTER INSIDE THE CITY AND CELEBRATE AS WELL?

AND OUR ORDERS WERE TO REMAIN OUTSIDE THE CITY WALLS AND SO THE ONLY THING WE CAN DO IS TO WAIT...

THAT IS BECAUSE WE ARE NOT OF THE OFFICIAL HAN ARMY.

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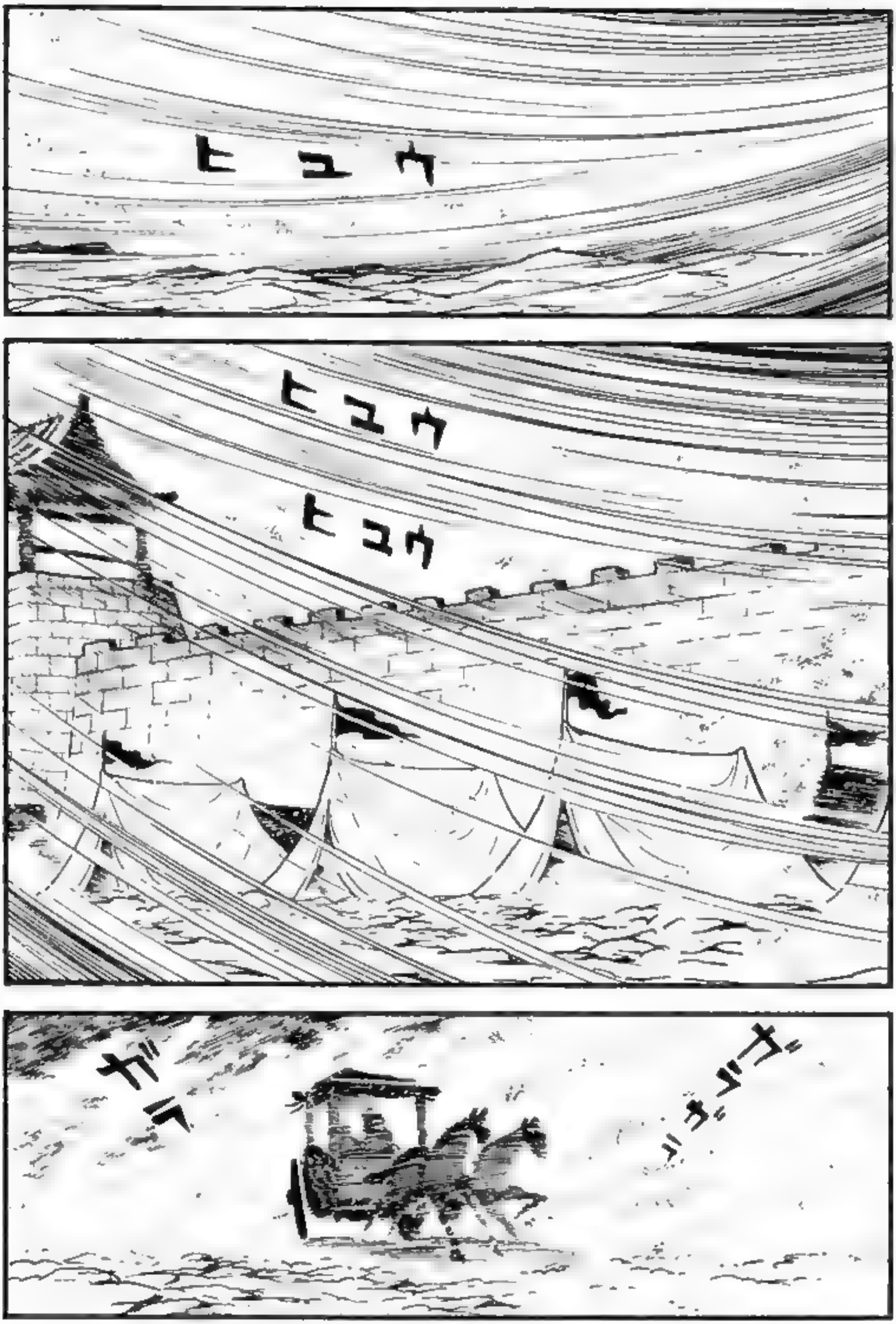
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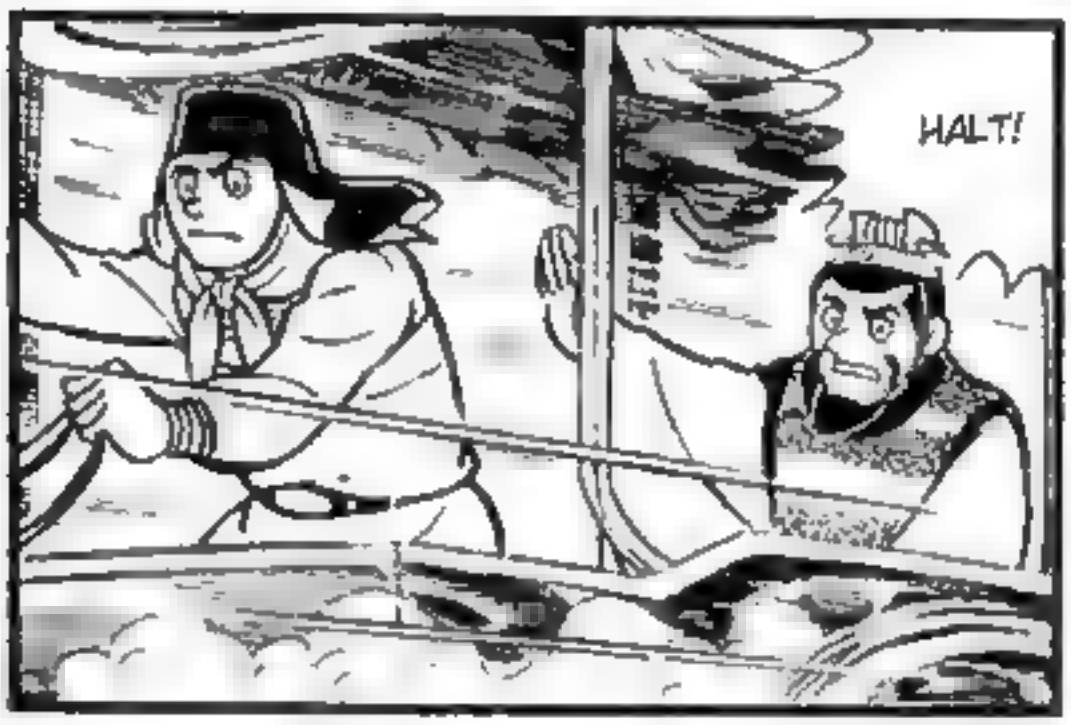
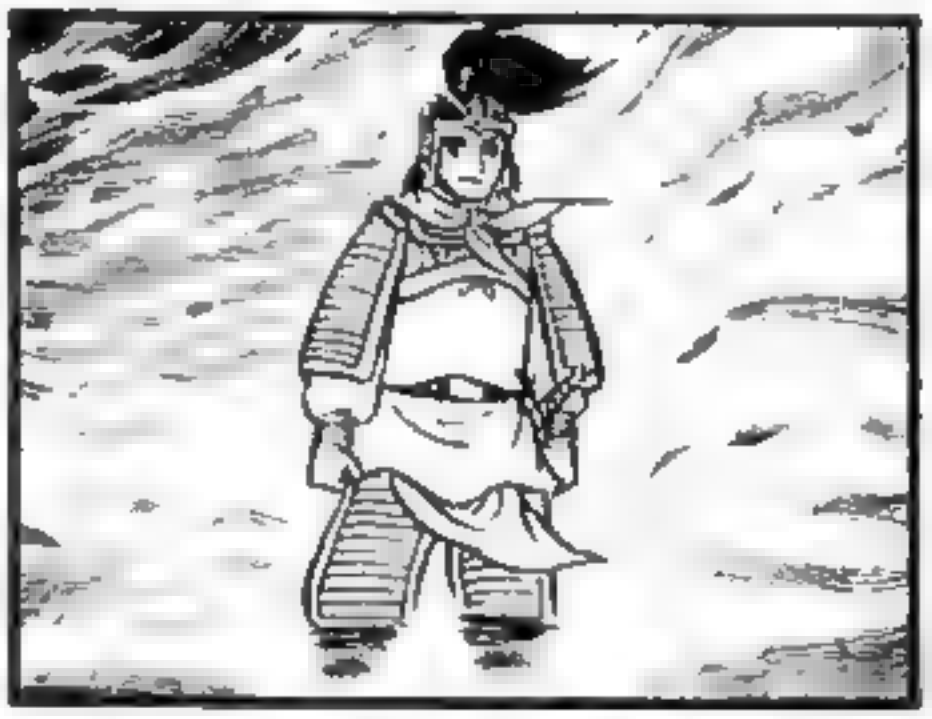
HMM?


HALT!



PLEASE EXCUSE ME BUT WHOM MAY YOU BE?

WELL, IF IT ISN'T LIU BEI.

I AM ZHANG JUN, WHO WAS WORKING WITH GENERAL LU ZH WHEN YOU VISITED US.

I WAS GIVEN THE ORDER TO REMAIN OUTSIDE THE CITY WALLS.

JUST WHAT ARE YOU OUTSIDE THE CITY WALLS FOR?

WHAT NONSENSE IS THIS! ALL THE OTHER SOLDIERS HAVE ALREADY BEEN REWARDED.

BUT WITH WINTER SOON APPROACHING AND WITH NO FURTHER WORD FROM THE HIGHER-UPS, I WAS WORRIED OVER WHAT TO DO.

GENERAL HUANGFU SONG HAS BEEN MADE GOVERNOR OF YIZHOU, AND GENERAL ZHU JUN HAS BEEN PROMOTED TO GENERAL OF THE FLYING CAVALRY.

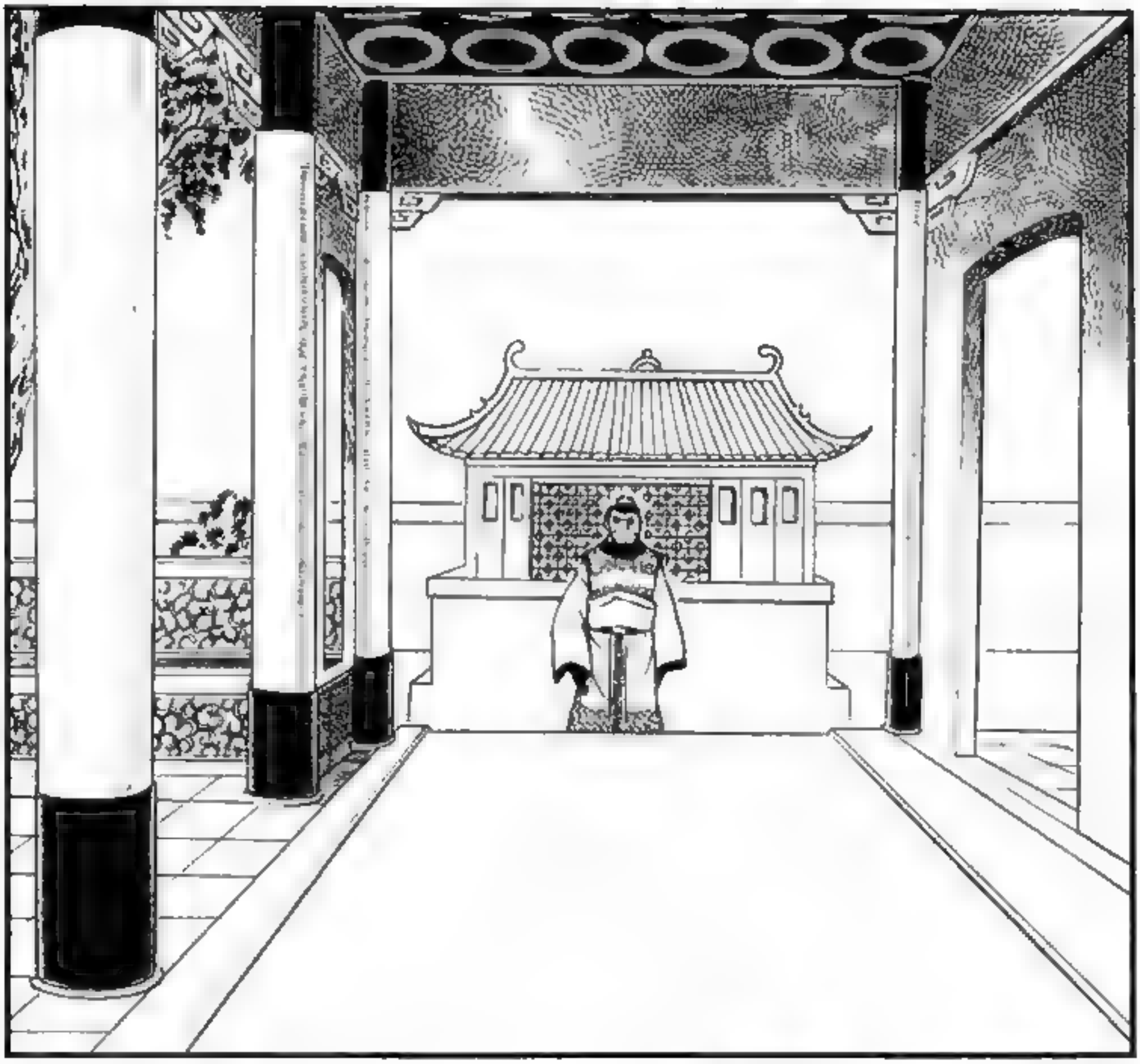
TO THINK THAT THEY WOULD TREAT YOU LIKE THIS!

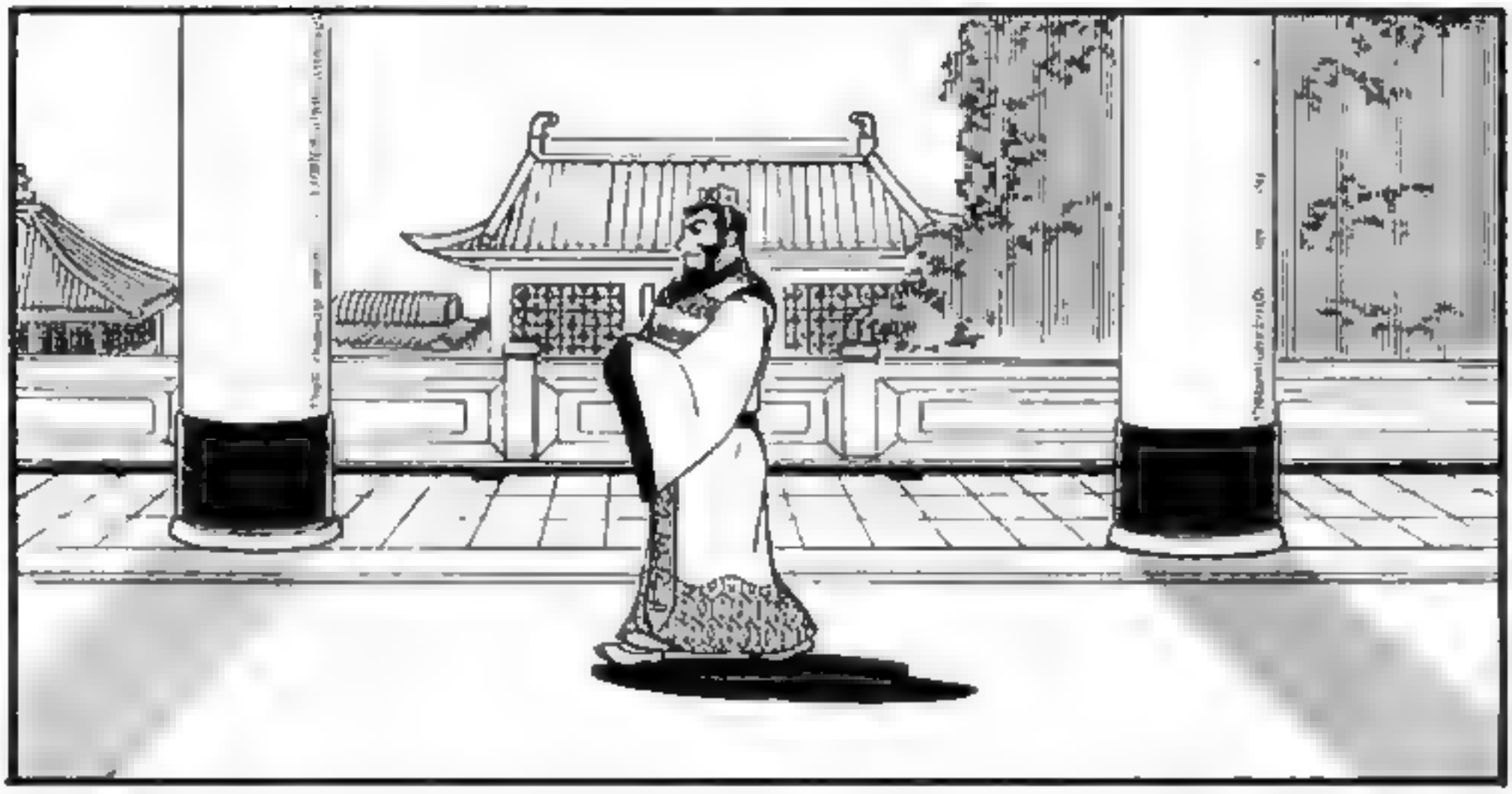
I UNDERSTAND. I AM ON MY WAY RIGHT NOW TO TALK WITH THE EMPEROR ABOUT ANOTHER MATTER.

YOU MAY HAVE BEEN JUST A VOLUNTEER ARMY BUT YOU WERE A BRILLIANT AND CAPABLE MAN OUT ON THE BATTLEFIELD. I BELIEVE THAT YOU WORKED HARDER AND HAVE CONTRIBUTED MORE THAN ANY OTHER GENERAL.

PLEASE WAIT OUTSIDE HERE FOR JUST A LITTLE LONGER. I ASSURE YOU GOOD NEWS SOON.

BUT I SHALL ALSO INFORM HIS HIGHNESS OF YOUR SITUATION.





I AM HONORED THAT YOUR MAJESTY HAS GRANTED ME THE PERMISSION TO SPEAK TO YOU ALONE.

AH, ZHANG JUN, I HAVE BEEN WAITING FOR YOU.

YES, I HAVE COME TODAY THE BRING LIGHT TO YOU OVER THE TRUTH ABOUT THE CURRENT STATE OF THE COURT.

YOU WISHED TO SPEAK ABOUT SOME MATTER ALONE WITH ME. WHAT IS IT?

YES, THAT IS WHY I WISHED TO SPEAK ALONE WITH YOUR MAJESTY.

THE TRUTH?

THE CHAOS IN THE WORLD TODAY IS CAUSED BY THE CORRUPTION OF THE COURT OFFICIALS.

THE CURRENT GOVERNMENT IS ONE THAT SEEKS TO SADDEN THOSE GOOD MEN WITH A SENSE OF JUSTICE

IF THE ROOT OF THIS PROBLEM IS NOT FIXED, WE MAY YET AGAIN FACE TWO OR THREE MORE REBELLIONS IN THE NEAR FUTURE.

EVEN THE CAUSE OF THE REBELLION ORIGINATED FROM THE PEOPLE'S DISSATISFACTION WITH THE CURRENT GOVERNMENT.

WHAT!

THE TEN ATTENDANTS MUST BE DISPOSED OF.

AND JUST WHAT DO YOU PROPOSE TO FIX THIS PROBLEM?

THE TEN ATTENDANTS WERE A GROUP OF 10 EUNUCHS WHICH HELD THE HIGHEST AUTHORITY IN ADMINISTERING THE GOVERNMENT SIMILAR TO TODAY'S CABINET MINISTERS.

AND KICK OUT ANY OFFICIALS WHO REFUSE TO BRIBE THEM.

THEY GRANT ANY WHO GIVE THEM BRIBES WITH HIGH POSITIONS,

THE TEN ATTENDANTS HAVE DONE MANY UNSCRUPULOUS ACTS, TAKING ADVANTAGE OF THE FACT THAT YOUR MAJESTY IS STILL YOUNG.

LIU BEI?

FOR EXAMPLE, TAKE THE CASE OF LIU BE., WHO IS NOW FORCED TO WAIT OUTSIDE THE CITY WALLS.

HOW CAN A COUNTRY BE ABLE TO GOVERN PROPERLY WITH SUCH THINGS GOING ON?

IS THIS TRUE?

IT IS THE TRUTH, YOUR MAJESTY.

HE HAS RISKED HIS LIFE MANY TIMES FOR THE SAKE OF THIS COUNTRY DURING THE REBELLION, AND HAS CONTRIBUTED MANY VICTORIES OUT ON THE BATTLEFIELDS. YET BECAUSE HE DID NOT BRIBE ANY OFFICIALS, HE IS NOW FORCED TO WAIT OUTSIDE THE CITY WALLS, IGNORED BY ALL.

AS LONG AS THE CURRENT SITUATION CONTINUES, THE DISSATISFACTION OF THE PEOPLE WILL RISE UP ONCE AGAIN AND PEACE WILL NOT BE MAINTAINED.

AND IT IS NOT JUST LIU BEI. THERE ARE MANY MEN LIKE HIM IN OUR LAND THAT SUFFER SIMILAR INJUSTICE.

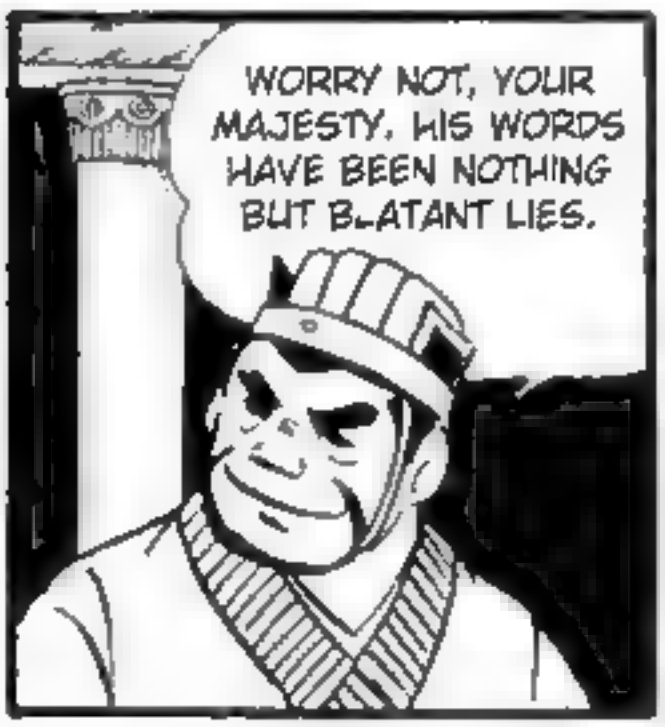
JUST AS THE REBELS HAVE BEEN DEALT WITH, THE TEN ATTENDANTS TOO, MUST BE SWEPT AWAY TO CLEANSE THIS PALACE AND THE COURT.

SO WHAT THEN, MUST I DO?

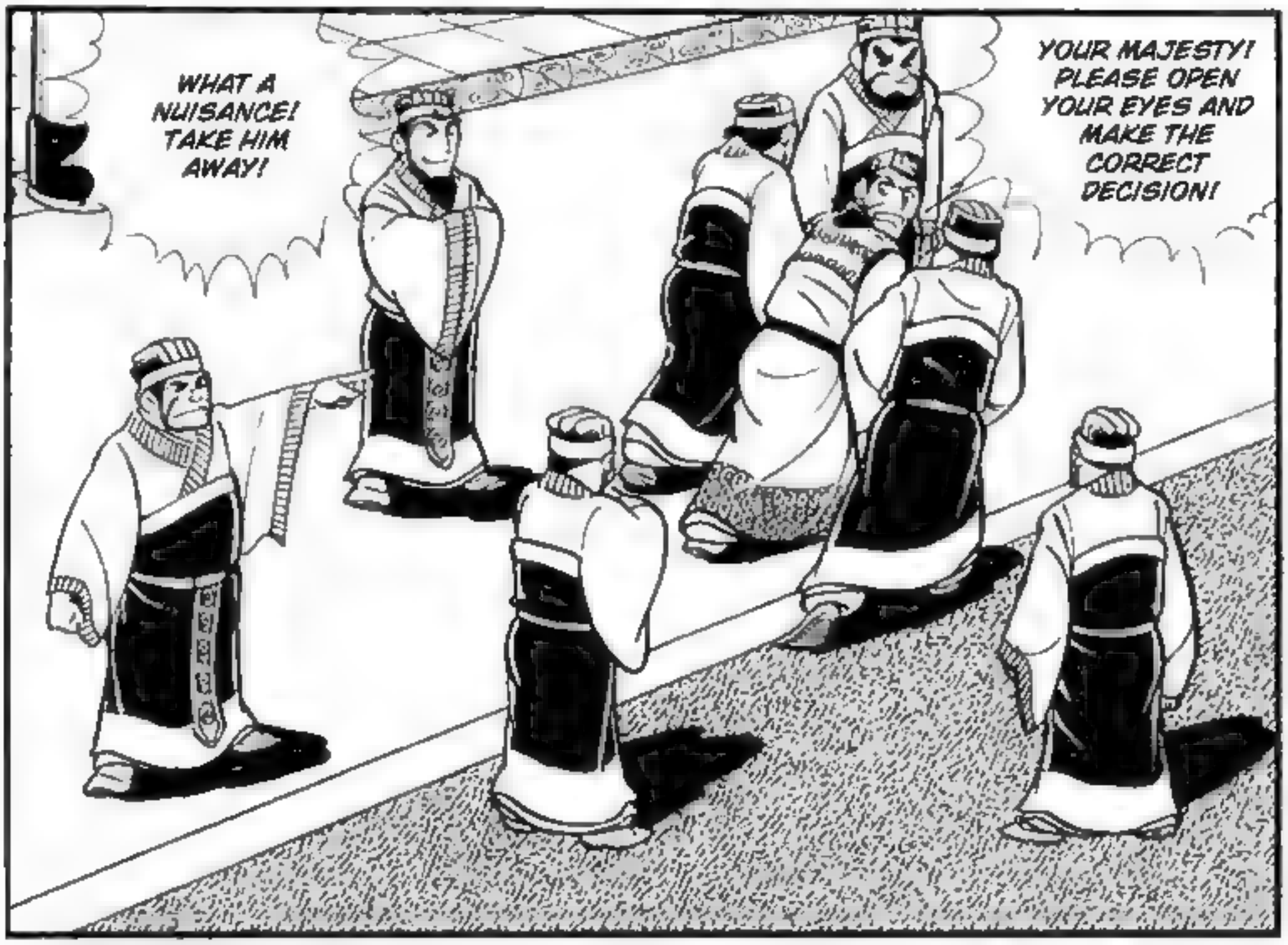
HAHAHA, THERE ARE MANY WICKED PEOPLE IN THIS WORLD WHO FEIGN LOYALTY AND RIGHTEOUSNESS IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE THEIR OWN SELFISH GAINS.

ARE YOU SO GREEDY THAT YOU ARE WILLING TO FALSELY ACCUSE INNOCENT PEOPLE?

T-THE TEN ATTENDANTS!


WORRY NOT, YOUR MAJESTY. HIS WORDS HAVE BEEN NOTHING BUT BLATANT LIES.

YOUR MAJESTY!
COME, WE SHALL SEE IF YOU ARE SINCERE OR NOT.


WHAT A NUISANCE! TAKE HIM AWAY!
YOUR MAJESTY! PLEASE OPEN YOUR EYES AND MAKE THE CORRECT DECISION!

IS THERE NO ONE NEARBY?

Y-YOUR MAJESTY, SEE HOW WICKED THEY ARE...

AH!

YES?

YES SIR.

THIS MAN WAS A DERANGED LUNATIC. CLEAN UP HIS CORPSE.

YES.

IT MIGHT BE BEST FOR US TO BE ON GUARD FOR MORE MEN LIKE HIM.

BUT HE SAID THAT A MAN NAMED LIU BEI IS WAITING OUTSIDE THE CASTLE WALLS RIGHT NOW.

HAHA, THESE THINGS CAN HAPPEN.

YES. HE TRIED TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF YOUR INEXPERIENCE SINCE YOU ARE STILL YOUNG.

SO EVERYTHING THAT ZHAN JUN SAID WAS A LIE?

IT IS NOT UNCOMMON THAT SOME REPORTS MIGHT HAVE BEEN MISFILED OR INACCURATELY REPORTED, CAUSING A PERSON TO BE MISTAKENLY IGNORED AND UNREWARDED.

WE HAVE MOBILIZED TENS OF THOUSANDS OF TROOPS TO BRING DOWN THE REBELLION AND THERE ARE MANY MANY MEN HERE AND THERE THAT HAVE CONTRIBUTED IN SOME WAY OR ANOTHER.

A WISE DECISION, YOUR MAJESTY.

YES, OF COURSE.

I SEE. THEN MAKE SURE TO GO OVER THESE REPORTS AGAIN TO CORRECT ANY ERRORS.

YES, DO SO NOW.

WE SHALL TAKE CARE OF IT RIGHT AWAY.

IS THERE A LIU BEI XUANDE HERE!?

AH, I SEE.

THAT WOULD BE ME.

PLEASE ACCEPT GRACIOUSLY.

AS PER THE MAJESTY'S GRACE, YOU HAVE HEREBY BEEN APPOINTED AS THE COUNTY MAGISTRATE OF ANXI COUNTY IN ZHONGSHAN FOR YOUR VALIANT EFFORTS IN QUELLING THE REBELLION.

THANK YOU.

IT SEEMS THAT THE DAY HAS COME WHEN THIS VOLUNTEER ARMY MUST DISBAND.

YES, BROTHER.

GUAN YU, I WON'T BE ABLE TO LEAD ALL THESE MEN IF I AM TO BE A COUNTY MAGISTRATE.

IT PAINS ME TO SAY THIS AFTER SHARING BOTH GOOD AND BAD TIMES FOR SO LONG BUT OUR VOLUNTEER ARMY MUST DISBAND AS OF TODAY.

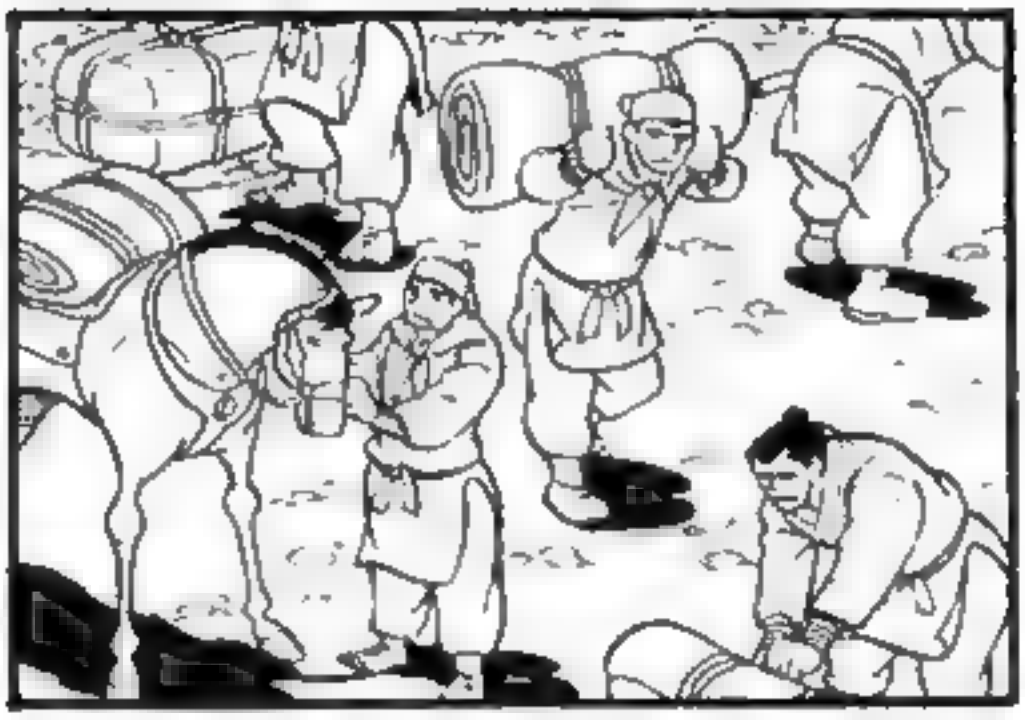
EVERYONE, IT IS AS YOU JUST HEARD. I HAVE BEEN APPOINTED THE MAGISTRATE OF ANXI COUNTY AND I CAN NO LONGER LEAD ALL OF YOU.

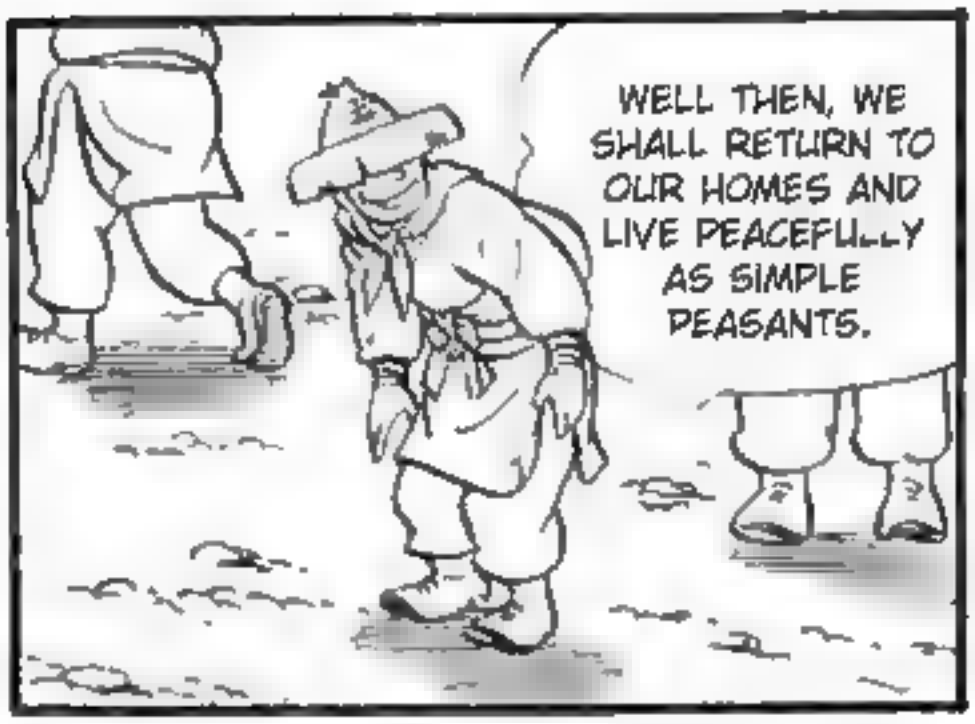
THANK YOU FOR FIGHTING UNDER ME UNTIL NOW.

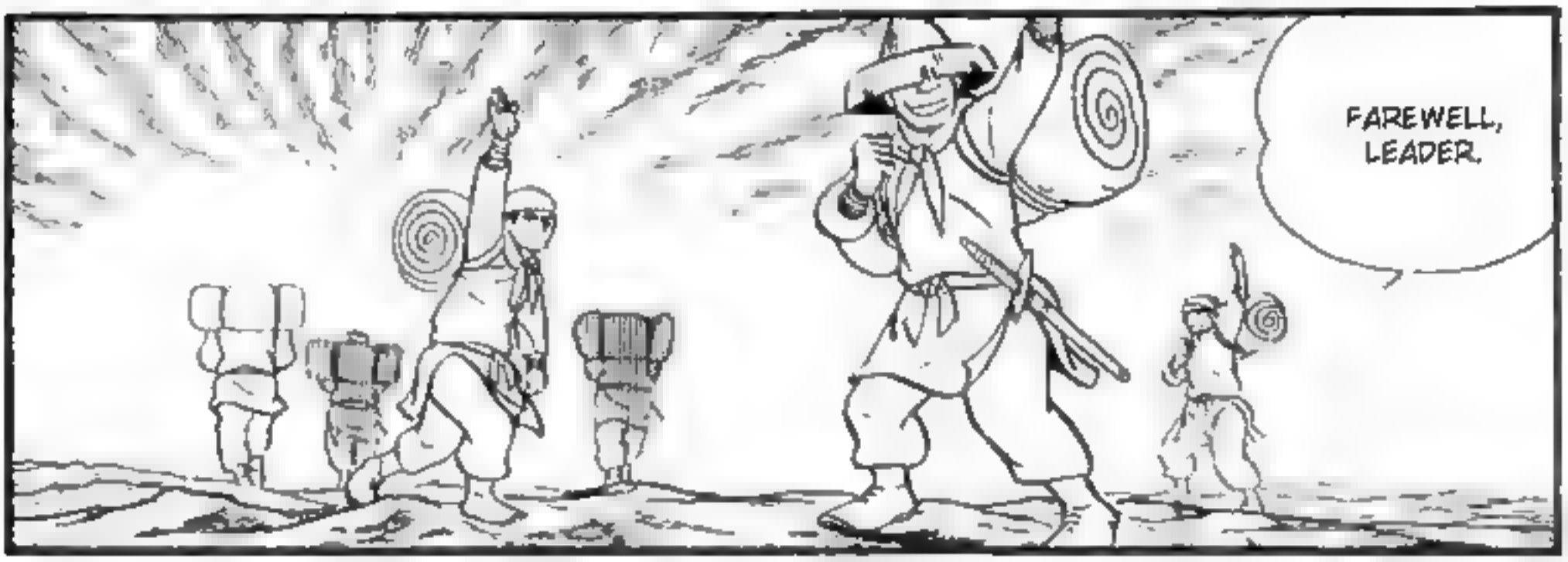
LET THE REMAINING SUPPLIES AND RATIONS BE DIVIDED EVENLY AMONG ALL SO THAT EACH CAN GO THEIR OWN WAY.

NO, IT IS US WHO SHOULD BE GRATEFUL FOR SERVING UNDER SUCH AN EXCELLENT LEADER, INFERIOR TO NO GENERAL EVEN IN THE OFFICIAL HAN ARMY.

I SHALL NEVER FORGET YOU ALL.




WELL THEN, WE SHALL RETURN TO OUR HOMES AND LIVE PEACEFULLY AS SIMPLE PEASANTS.


FAREWELL, LEADER.

MAY YOU HAVE A SAFE JOURNEY BACK HOME!

IMPERIAL MESSENGER

DURING THAT TIME, THERE WAS NOT A HINT OF ANY CRIME AND THE VILLAGERS LIVED HAPPILY, GIVING THEIR TRUST TO LIU BEI.

4 MONTHS HAD PASSED SINCE LIU BEI STARTED WORKING AS THE COUNTY MAGISTRATE OF ANXI.

WHAT IS IT?

SIR!

I SEE.

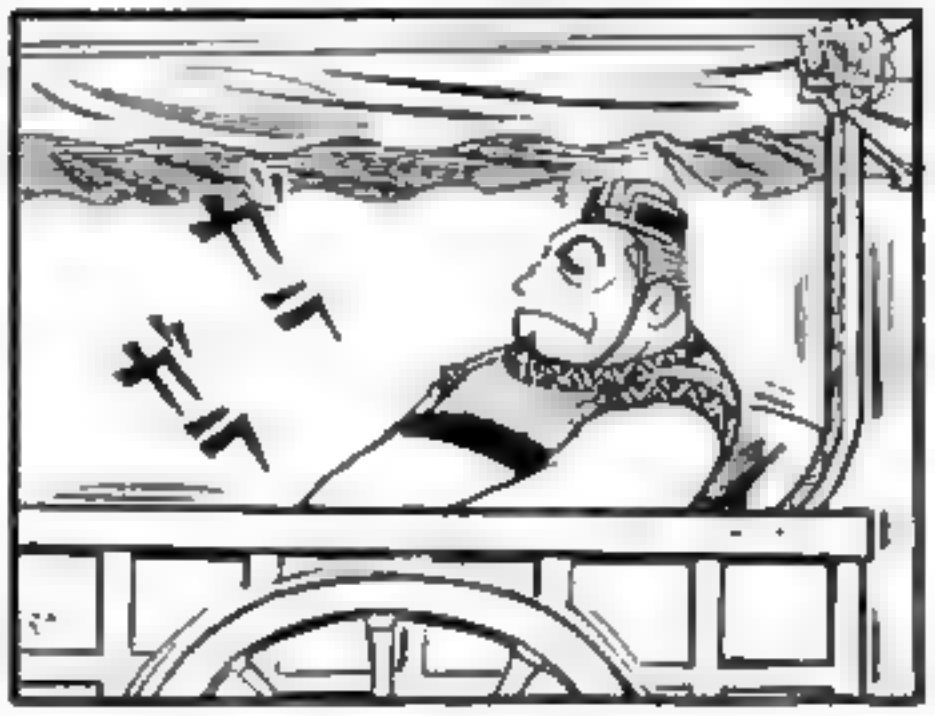
I'VE JUST RECEIVED WORD THAT AN IMPERIAL MESSENGER IS HEADED HERE.

I AM SURE THAT HE WILL BE SATISFIED WITH WHAT HE SEES.

WELL, WE MUST STILL TREAT AN IMPERIAL MESSENGER WITH THE UTMOST RESPECT.

IT SEEMS THAT HE IS COMING TO CHECK UP ON HOW THE NEWLY APPOINTED PEOPLE SUCH AS YOURSELF ARE FARING.

HMM, SO THIS IS ANXI COUNTY? IT LOOKS LIKE A TOWN FULL OF BEGGARS.



UGH, STAY AWAY, YOU ALL REEK!

AH SO THAT'S THE IMPERIAL MESSENGER HERE FOR INSPECTION.

HE'S SUPPOS-EDLY HERE TO REPORT ON THOSE ABUSING THEIR POWER.

I AM THE MAGISTRATE OF HERE, LIU BEI XUANDE.

WHO IS THAT BLOCKING MY CART?

HMM?

I SEE. WELL, IT DOESN'T SEEM LIKE THIS PLACE WOULD HAVE MUCH LUXURIES ANYWAYS.

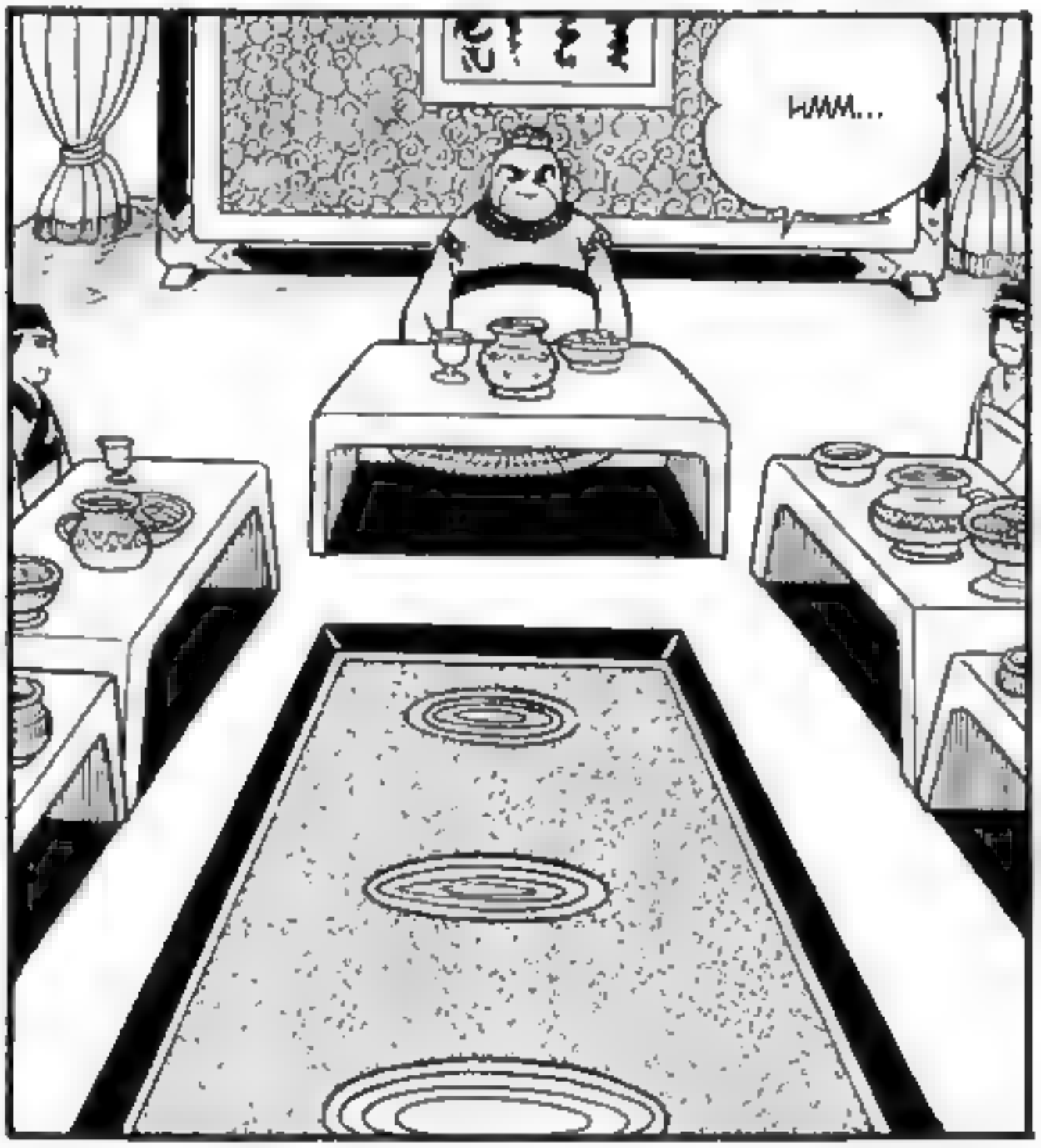
WE MAY NOT BE ABLE TO OFFER A VERY LUXURIOUS ACCOMODATION BUT HOPEFULLY IT IS NOT TO YOUR DISLIKING.

AH, I SEE. I'M SURE YOU'VE PREPARED A PROPER PLACE FOR MY STAY, OF COURSE?

YES SIR.

BUT THAT IS STILL UP TO YOUR ABILITIES.

IS THIS REALLY THE BEST YOU CAN OFFER, LIU BEI XUANDE?

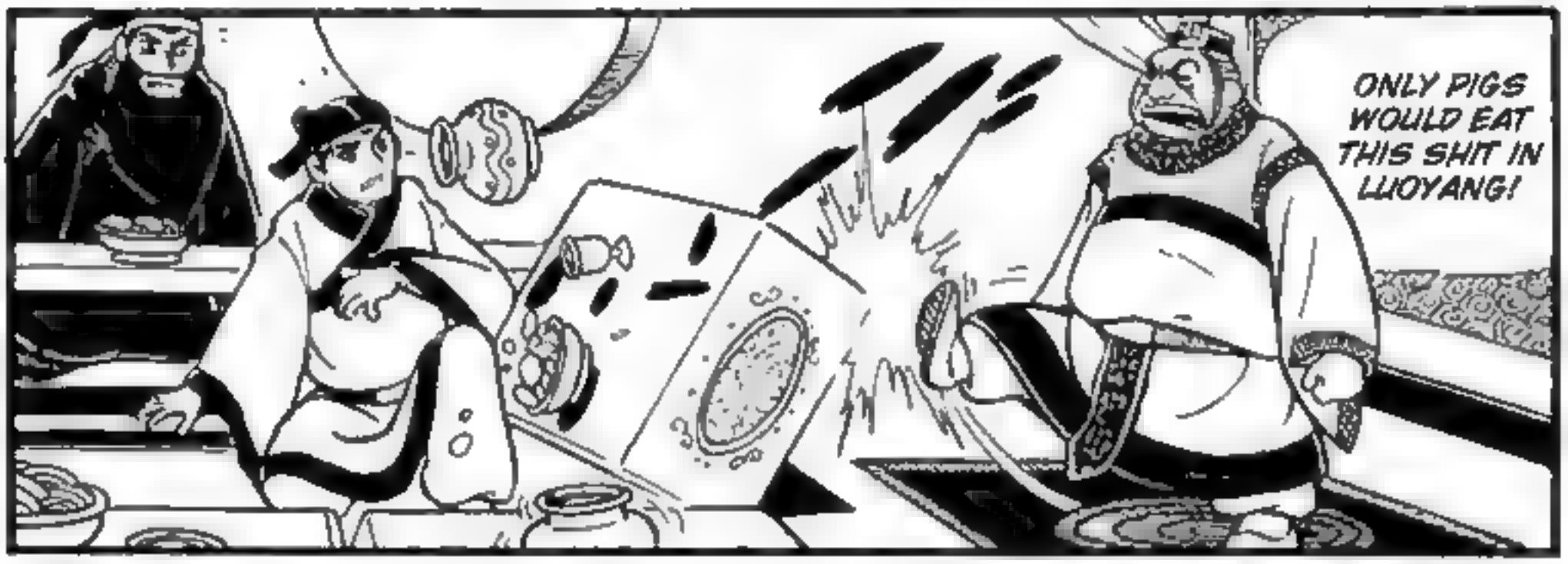

HMM...

IS THERE ANYTHING THAT YOU NEED, SIR?

OF COURSE... AND YOU MUST HAVE GREW UP AS A PEASANT.

NO, I WAS BORN AND RAISED IN ZHUO COUNTY.
WHERE ARE YOU FROM?

I ONLY EAT AND DRINK THE MOST LUXURIOUS FOODS AND ALCOHOL BACK IN THE CAPITAL. DO YOU REALLY THINK THAT I WOULD BE SATISFIED WITH SUCH A MEAGER MEAL?
IS THERE SOMETHING TO YOUR DISLIKING?


ONLY PIGS WOULD EAT THIS SHIT IN LUOYANG!

A MAN WHO CAN'T EVEN REALIZE SUCH A SIMPLE FACT IS LIKELY TO BE USELESS IN HIS WORK AS WELL. I SHALL MAKE A THOROUGH INVESTIGATION FROM TOMORROW.

GUAN YU, DO YOU NOT FEEL ANYTHING TOWARDS THIS?

IT MAKES THE BLOOD RUSH INTO MY HEAD MORE THAN IF IT WERE I THAT HAD BEEN INSULTED.

TO HAVE THE LORD THAT I CHOSE TO SERVE UNDER BE SO DISGRACED...

LIU BEI IS THE LORD THAT WE HAVE CHOSEN TO SERVE. AND HE IS NOW BEING MOCKED AND INSULTED.

IS THAT A RHETORICAL QUESTION? I SHALL BEAT THIS SWINE UNTIL HE IS UNABLE TO EVEN STAND UP.

ZHANG FEI, WHAT ARE YOU DOING!?

YOU DARE ACT SO RUDELY TOWARDS ME, A MESSENGER SENT BY THE MAJESTY HIMSELF!?

WHAT!?

GUARDS, ARREST THIS DERANGED MAN!!

WE HAVE OFFERED OUR HOSPITALITY AS GRACIOUSLY AS POSSIBLE TO THE BEST OF OUR ABILITIES, AND YET WE'RE THE RUDE ONES!?

HMPH! WHO'S THE ONE BEING RUDE HERE!?

THERE IS A LIMIT TO IGNORING SUCH IMPUDENCE!

BUT BROTHER,

ZHANG FEI, RESTRAIN YOURSELF!

HMPH, IF YOU SAY SO, I SHALL RETURN FOR NOW AND SEE HOW YOUR RECOMPENSATE FOR THIS TOMORROW.

SIR, PLEASE FORGIVE OUR INSOLENCE. AS SIMPLE VILLAGERS, WE WERE FOOLISHLY NAIVE. I SHALL VISIT YOUR PLACE TOMORROW MORNING TO RECTIFY OUR MISTAKE SO PLEASE...

HMPH, BUNCH OF COUNTRY BUMPKINS!

STOP IT, ZHANG FEI!

GRRR, THOSE DAMN FOXES PARADING AROUND WITH A TIGER'S TAIL!

JUST THINK RATIONALLY! WHAT WOULD COME OF YOU BEATING THE IMPERIAL MESSENGER TO A BLOODY PULP!

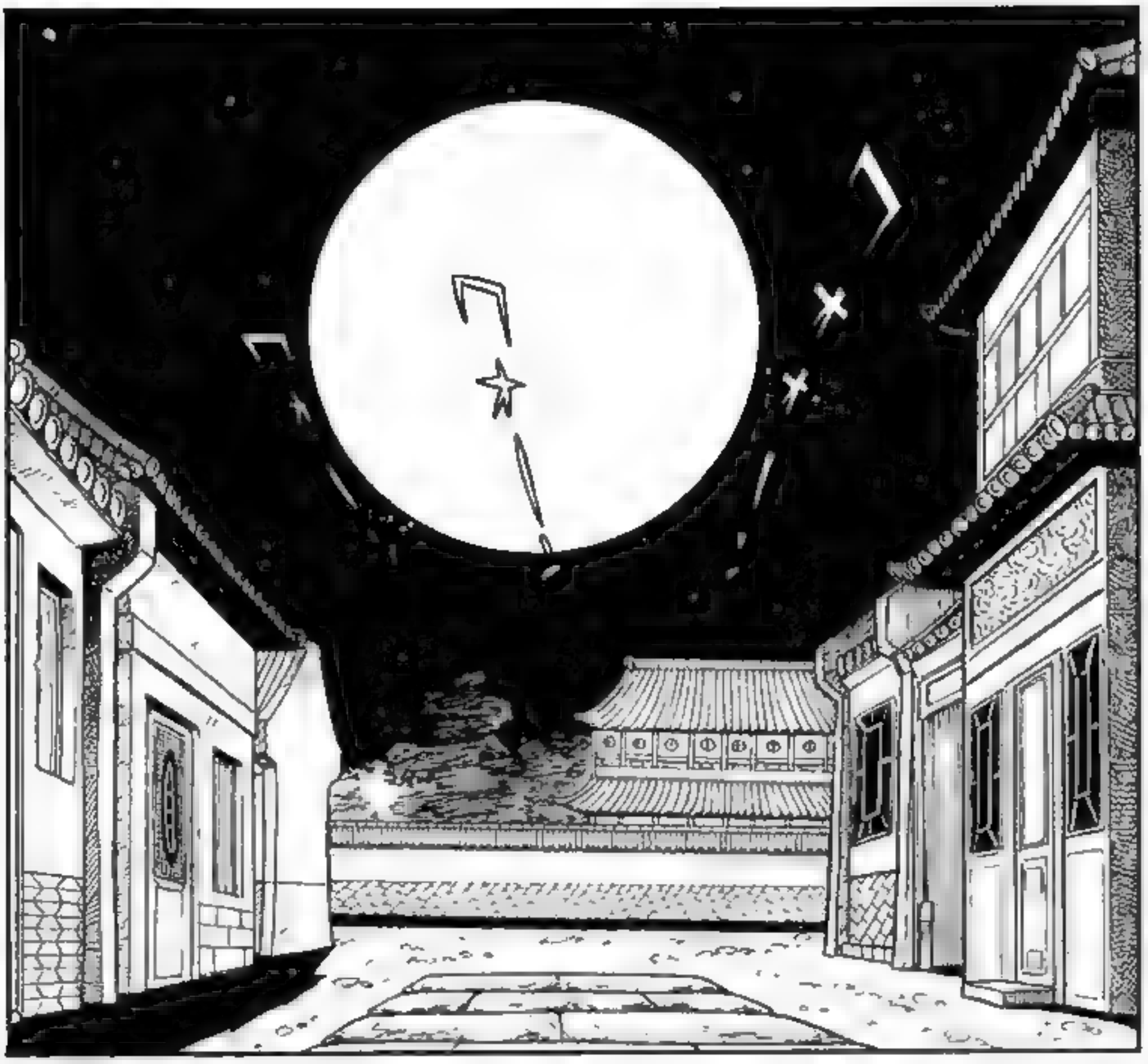
GUAN YU, WHY DO YOU STOP ME WHEN YOU SHOULD BE ALSO SEEKING TO RECTIFY THE SHAME BROUGHT TO OUR BROTHER!

THAT'S ENOUGH, GUAN YU. THIS WAS ALL MY FAULT.

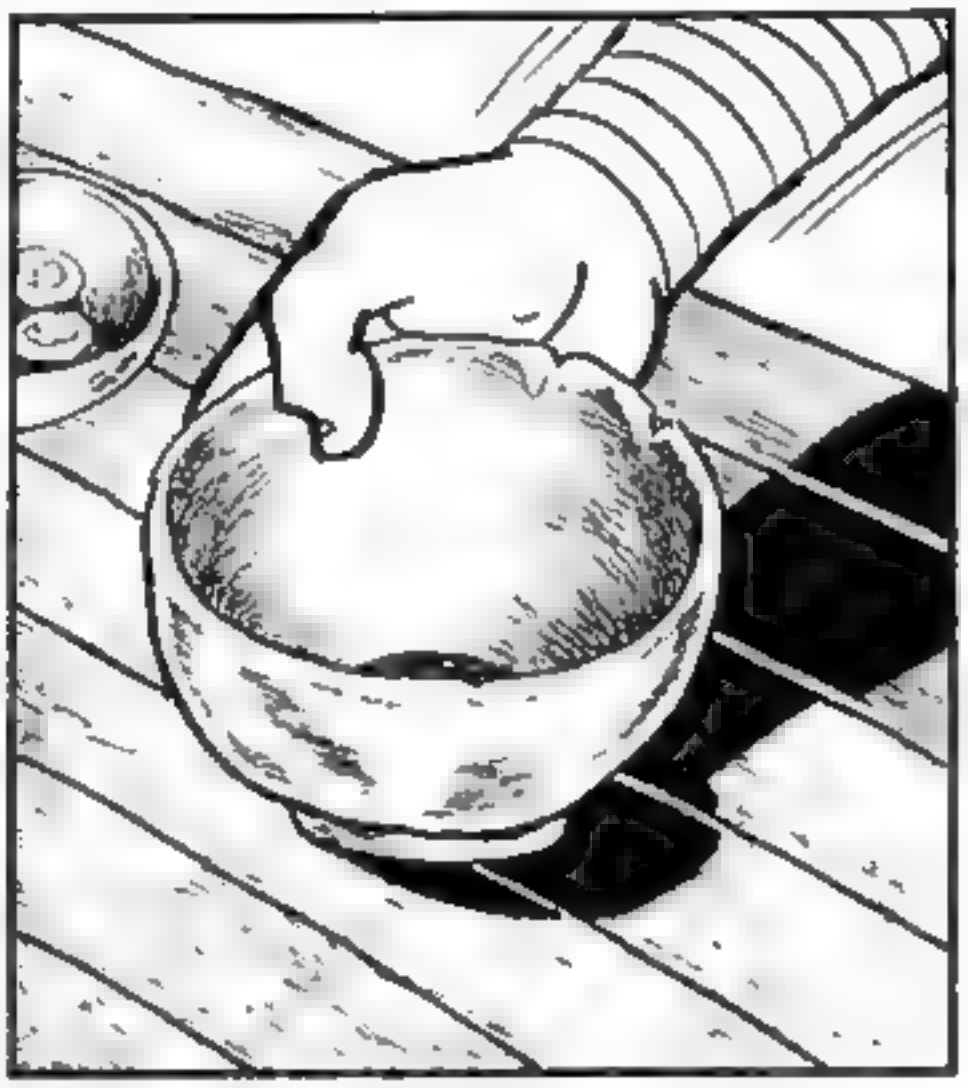
BEING A FOOLISH COUNTRY BUMPKIN, I WAS IGNORANT OF THE PROPER WAY TO SERVE AN IMPERIAL MESSENGER.

BROTHER WILL SURELY BE DEMOTED, AND MIGHT EVEN BE SENTENCED TO PRISON OR WORSE!

I SHALL ASK TOMORROW TO HIS ATTENDANTS OF THE PROPER WAY TO SERVE AND TREAT HIM.



HEY, BARK-KEEP, I NEED SOME MORE BOOZE HERE!



FOR NIGHTS LIKE THESE, I CAN'T SLEEP UNLESS I DRINK SOME MORE.

IT'S FINE, JUST BRING ME SOME MORE.

SIR, DON'T YOU THINK YOU'VE DRUNK ENOUGH BY NOW? I MERELY SPEAK OUT OF CONCERN FOR YOUR WELL-BEING.

AND I DIDN'T FIGHT JUST SO I COULD WAG MY TAIL AT THAT SCUM THEY CALL AN IMPERIAL MESSENGER.

I DIDN'T HELP ORGANIZE OUR VOLUNTEER ARMY AND FIGHT THE REBELS TO LIVE OUT THE REST OF MY DAYS IN SOME SMALL VILLAGE.

BUT LOOK AT OUR SORRY SITUATION NOW.

WE ROSE UP FOR A GREATER PURPOSE, TO BRING HAPPINESS AND PEACE TO MILLIONS OF PEOPLE.

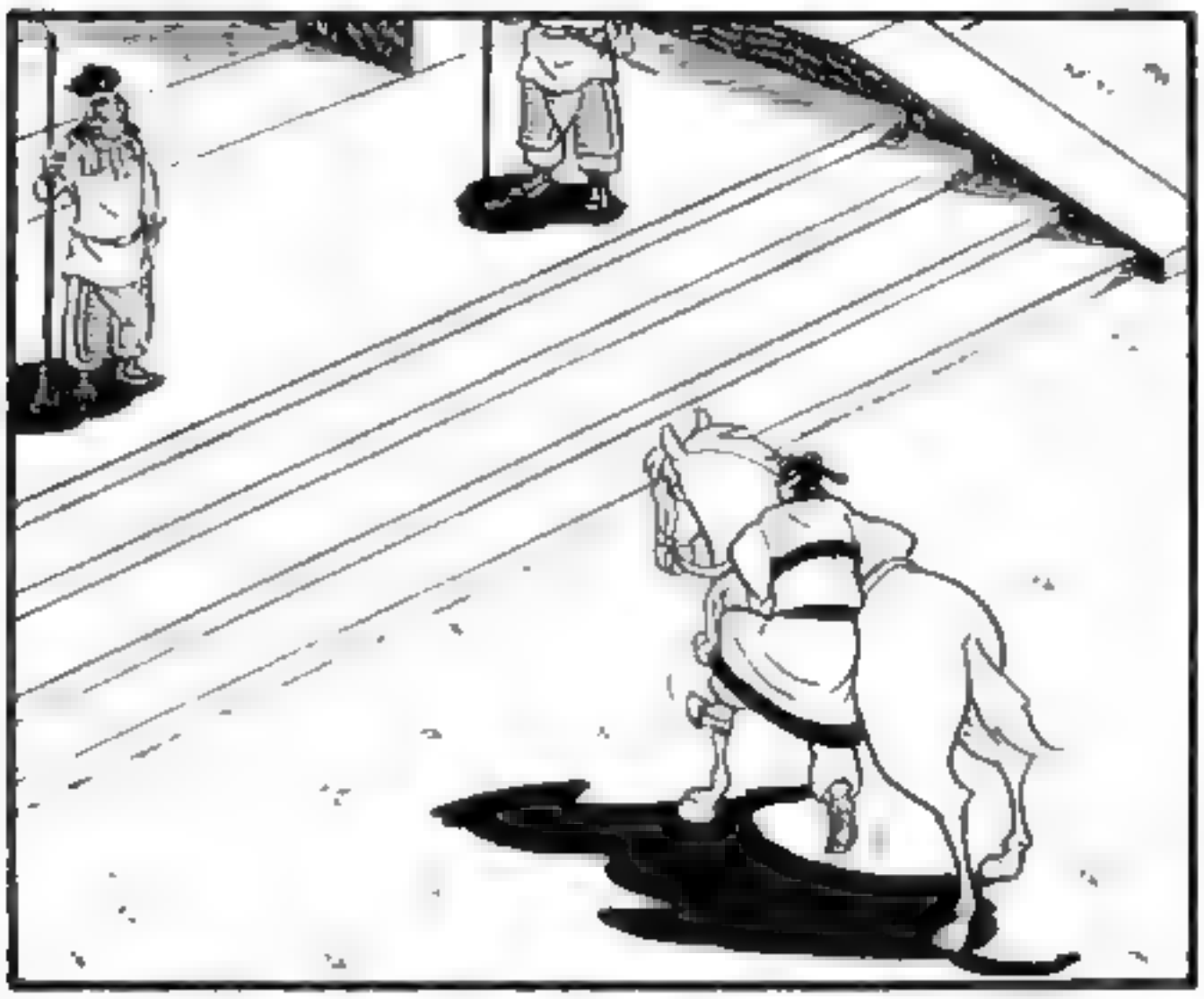
JUST WHERE DID WE GO WRONG?

WE'RE FORCED TO SUCK UP TO THAT SWINE.

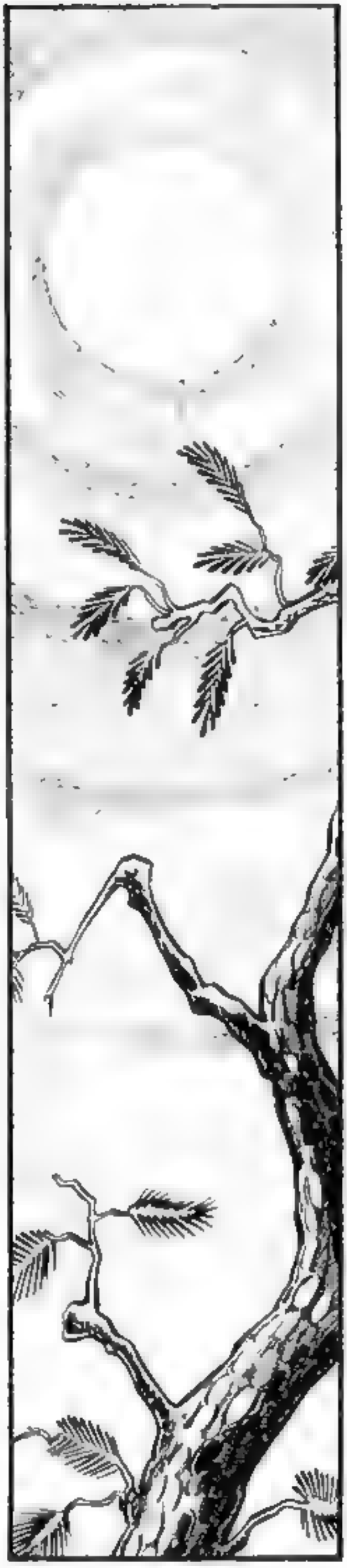
HOW COULD I NOT...

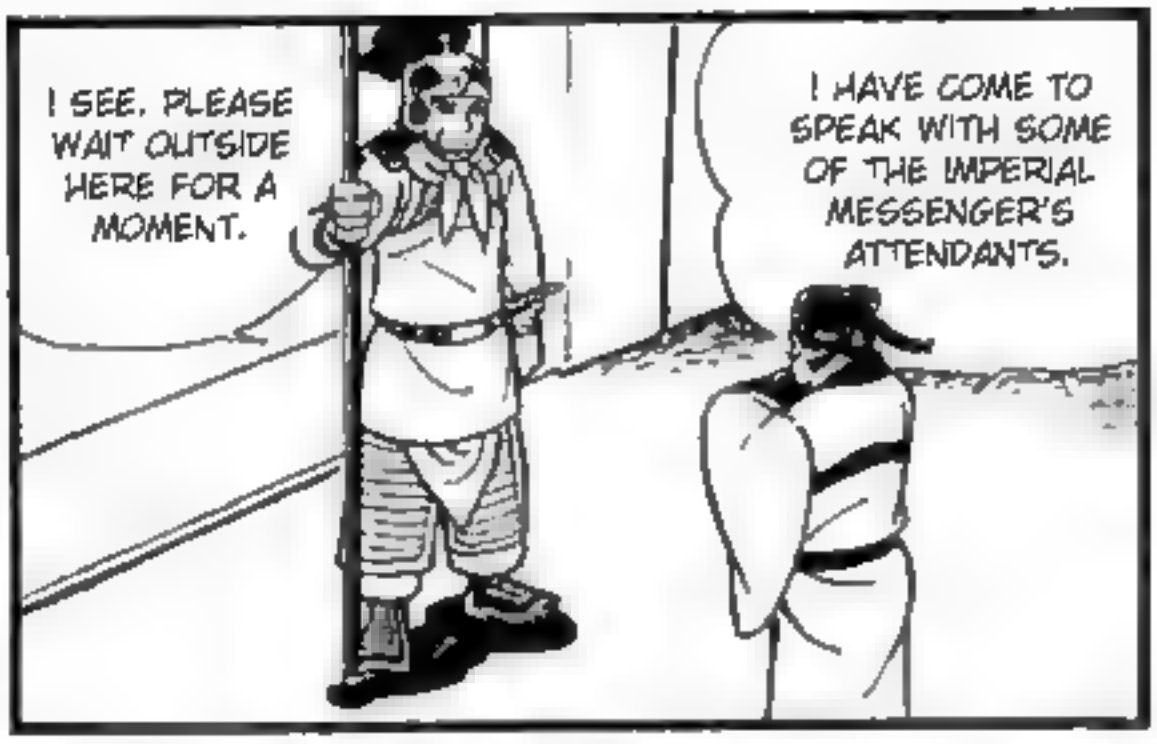
JUST HOW COULD I NOT DRINK MORE...?

ARE YOU ALRIGHT, SIR?



ALRIGHT.
I AM LIU BEI XUANDE, THE ANXI COUNTY MAGISTRATE.




I SEE. PLEASE WAIT OUTSIDE HERE FOR A MOMENT.
I HAVE COME TO SPEAK WITH SOME OF THE IMPERIAL MESSENGER'S ATTENDANTS.

OVER HEREEE!

WHERE? WHERE?

OHOHO!
LET'S DRINK, LET'S DRINK!

HAHA, CAUGHT YA!

HE'S DRINKING AND PLAYING WITH WOMEN IN THE MIDDLE OF THE DAY?

PLEASE FORGIVE ME FOR LAST NIGHT.

AH, YOU MUST BE LIU BEI.

YOU SAID YOU WANTED TO TALK TO ME ABOUT SOME-THING...

AH, I SEE...

YES. I WAS RAISED ALL MY LIFE OUT IN THE COUNTRY AND I AM IGNORANT OF THE PROPER WAY TO TREAT OFFICIALS FROM THE CAPITAL. PLEASE, IF YOU WOULD TEACH ME A THING OR TWO...

HMM?

HAHA. YOU ARE STILL QUITE GREEN.

WHAT HE REALLY MEANS IS FOR YOU TO BRIBE HIM.

WHAT!

WHAT?

YOU STILL HAVEN'T REALIZED WHAT HE MEANT BY SUCH A "MEAGER TREATMENT?"

THAT IS WHAT HE MEANT BY "MEAGER."

THAT'S HOW ALL THE OTHERS HAVE TREATED HIM, EVEN ME, HIS ATTENDANT.

YOU COULD ALWAYS JUST RAISE THE TAXES AND USE THE EXTRA AMOUNT TO...

WHAT!

THAT IS UP TO YOUR CAPABILITIES.

BUT THIS IS JUST A SMALL POOR TOWN. THE TAXES COLLECTED ARE ALREADY SENT TO THE CAPITAL. JUST HOW AM I SUPPOSED TO FIND THE MONEY TO BRIBE HIM?

I'M SUPPOSED TO BRIBE HIM...?

IN ANY CASE, I MUST BE BACK TO ATTEND HIS SIDE. PLEASE EXCUSE ME.

KYAAA!

OHOHOHO, OVER HERE!

AHAHAHA, WHERE!? WHERE ARE YOU MY DEARS! I'LL CATCH YOU SOON ENOUGH!

GUAN YU ALSO SHUT HIMSELF INSIDE SPENDING HIS TIME AWAY BY ONLY READING BOOKS

AFTER THAT DAY, LIU BEI SHUT HIMSELF INSIDE AND DID NOT COME OUT

AS FOR ZHANG FEI, HE SHUT HIMSELF INSIDE A BAR AND CONTINUED TO DRINK. THE THREE BROTHERS DID NOT TALK TO EACH OTHER AT ALL.

WHAT'S GOING ON!? THAT LIU BEI STILL HASN'T COME TO SEE ME YET!!

HOW DARE HE TREAT ME, WHO CAME ALL THE WAY FROM THE CAPITAL AT THE MAJESTY'S ORDER, WITH SUCH DISRESPECT

YES, SIR. IT SEEMS HE'S SHUT HIMSELF INSIDE HIS HOME.

YES, SIR.

GO BRING ME ONE OF THE MEN WORKING UNDER LIU BEI.

FINE, IF THAT'S THE WAY HE WANTS IT, HE BETTER BE PREPARED FOR THE CONSEQUENCES.

AH, YES. YOU DO WORK UNDER LIU BEI, CORRECT?

YOU CALLED ME, SIR?

NOW ABOUT THAT LIU BEI,

GOOD, GOOD.

YES SIR, I CARRY OUT SOME OF HIS ORDERS.

ACORDING TO WHAT I'VE HEARD, IT SEEMS THAT LIU BEI IS A MAN WHO CARES MORE FOR HIS OWN WELL-BEING THAN THAT OF THE VILLAGERS.

SILENCE! DID I GIVE YOU PERMISSION TO TALK FREELY!?

NO, THAT'S NOT TRUE AT ALL, SIR. LIU BEI IS A WONDERFUL AND GENEROUS MAN.

I DIDN'T ASK FOR YOUR OPINIONS! JUST ANSWER MY QUESTIONS!

BUT IT IS COMMON KNOWLEDGE AMONG VILLAGERS THAT THIEVES AND CRIMINALS HAVE DISAPPEARED EVER SINCE HE WAS APPOINTED THE MAGISTRATE.

I NEED TO REPORT TO THE KING OF LIU BEI'S CRIMES AND FOR THAT, I NEED YOU TO WRITE AND SIGN A LETTER OF COMPLAINT.

N-NO, I NEVER...

OR ARE YOU IMPLYING THAT MY INSPECTION YIELDED ERRONEOUS FINDINGS?

F-FORGIVE ME SIR BUT I COULD NEVER DO THAT. PLEASE, ANYTHING BUT THAT...

IF YOU UNDERSTAND, THEN WRITE THAT LETTER!

IF YOU REFUSE, I SHALL CONVICT BOTH YOU AND LIU BEI OF YOUR CRIMES.

AGHHH!

OF COURSE, IT'S NATURAL FOR CRIMINALS TO BE EXECUTED.

GOOD, I SHALL FORGIVE YOU IF YOU WRITE IT.

I-I'LL WRITE IT, I'LL WRITE IT!! SO PLEASE, JUST SPARE MY LIFE!

DONE?

Y-YES.

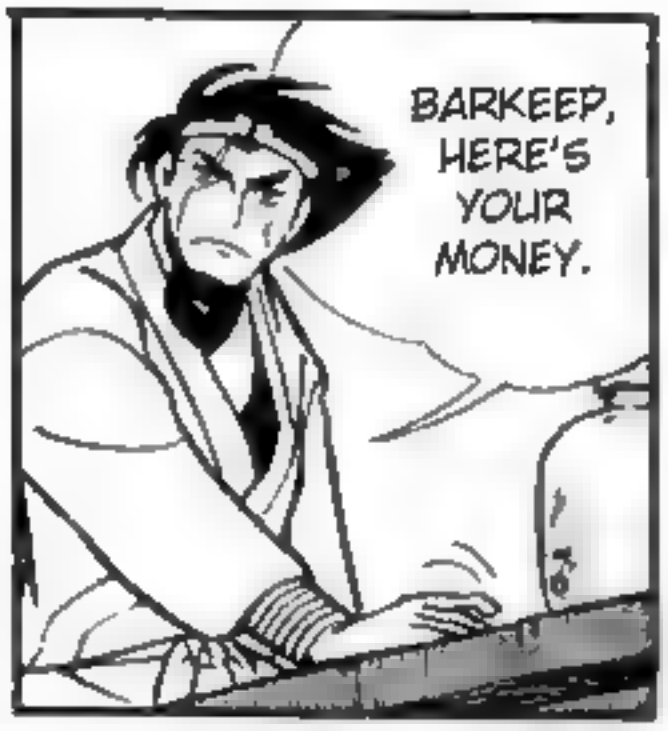
FORGIVE ME LIU BEI... I HAVE A WIFE AND CHILD TO TAKE CARE OF. I CANNOT DIE SO SOON...

YES SIR.

SEND THIS LETTER TO THE CAPITAL.

HEH HEH, GOOD.

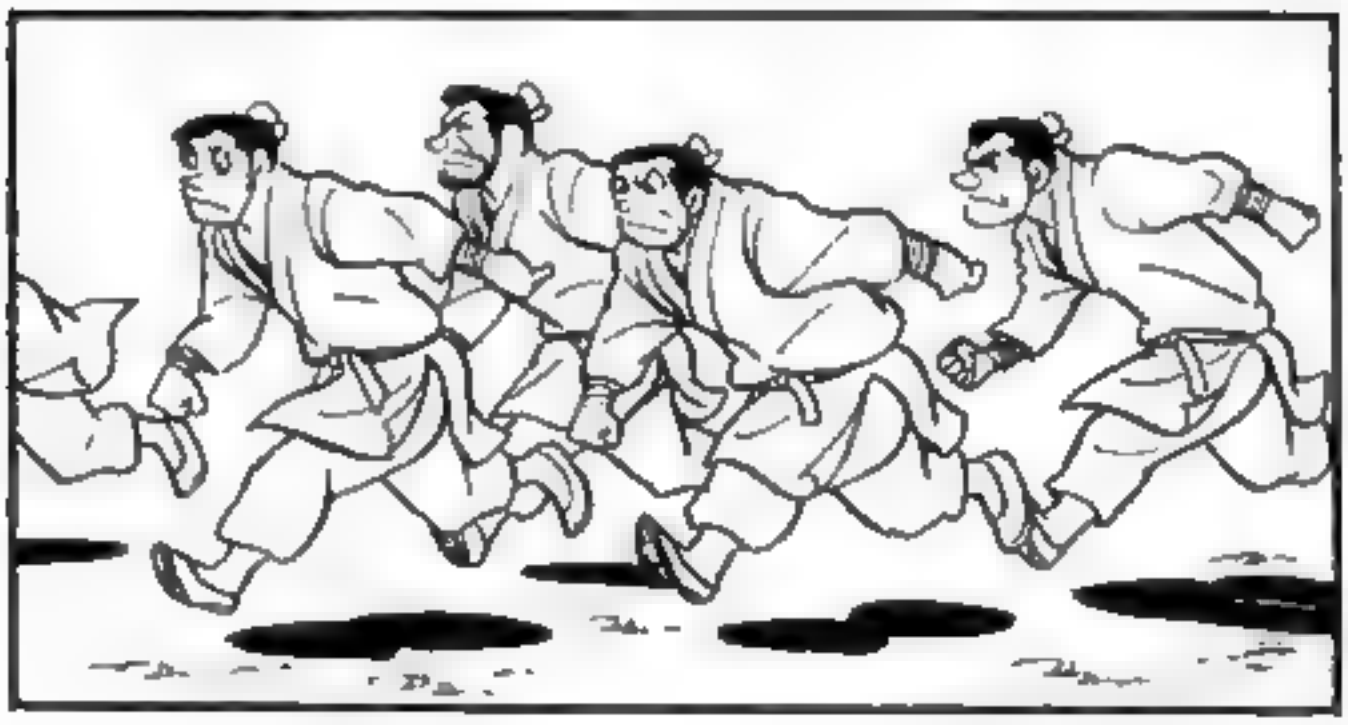
HAHAHA. LIU BEI, LEARN WELL WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YOU TREAT ME WITH DISRESPECT.


BARKEEP, HERE'S YOUR MONEY.

THANK YOU, SIR.

UGH...

MMM...

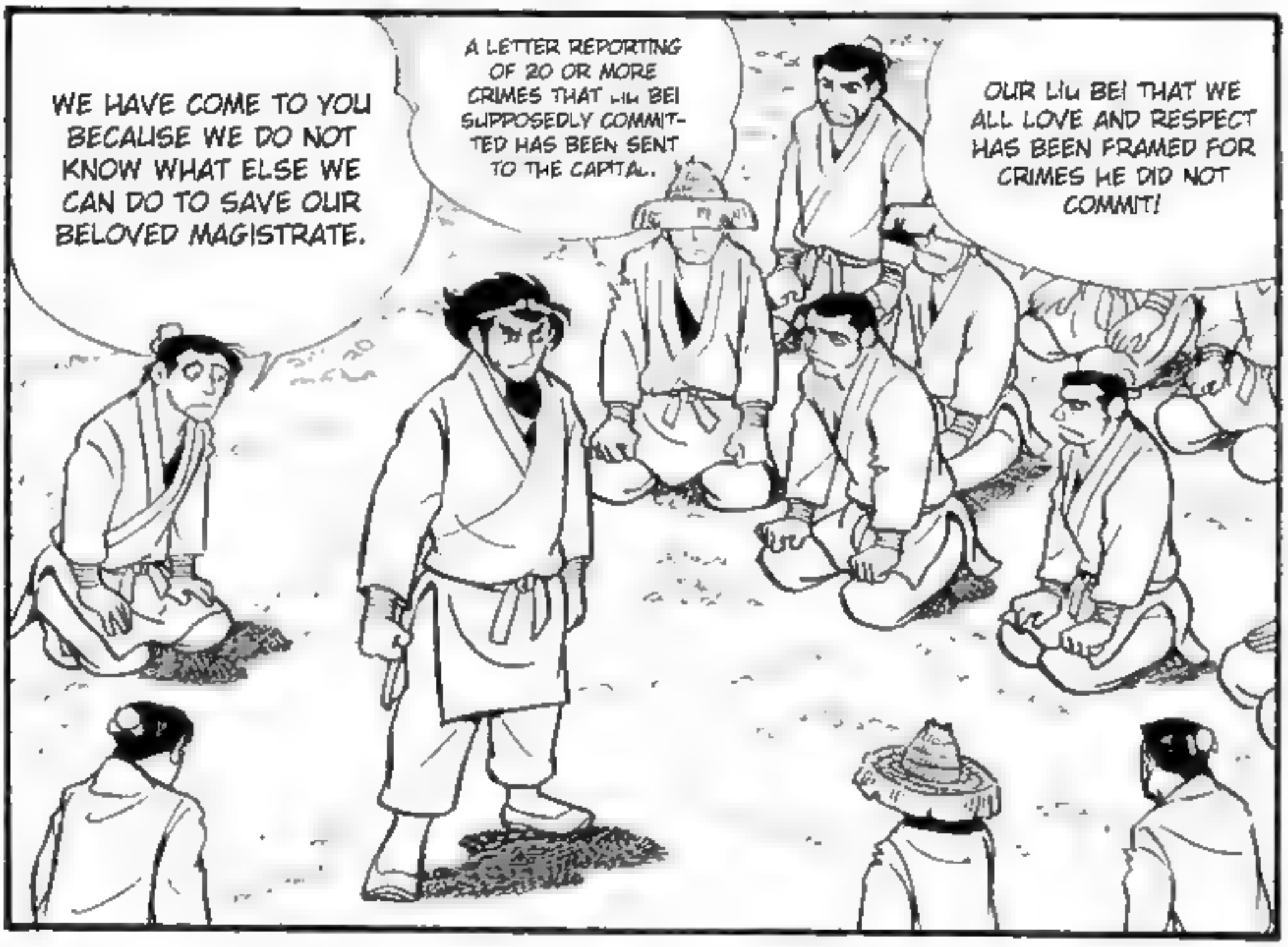


HUH?

WHAT'S THE MATTER?

HAVE YOU NOT HEARD OF THE NEWS YET?

PLEASE LISTEN TO OUR REQUEST, SIR.
PLEASE, SIR.


WE HAVE COME TO YOU BECAUSE WE DO NOT KNOW WHAT ELSE WE CAN DO TO SAVE OUR BELOVED MAGISTRATE.
A LETTER REPORTING OF 20 OR MORE CRIMES THAT LIU BEI SUPPOSEDLY COMMITTED HAS BEEN SENT TO THE CAPITAL.
OUR LIU BEI THAT WE ALL LOVE AND RESPECT HAS BEEN FRAMED FOR CRIMES HE DID NOT COMMIT!

THAT BASTARD, I WON'T FORGIVE HIM ANY LONGER...

YES, AS SOON AS THE RESPONSE COMES FROM THE CAPITAL, THEY WILL ARREST HIM.

IS THIS TRUE?

MOVE!

IF YOU DON'T OPEN IT, THEN I SHALL HAVE TO BREAK IT DOWN MYSELF!

OPEN THIS GATE!

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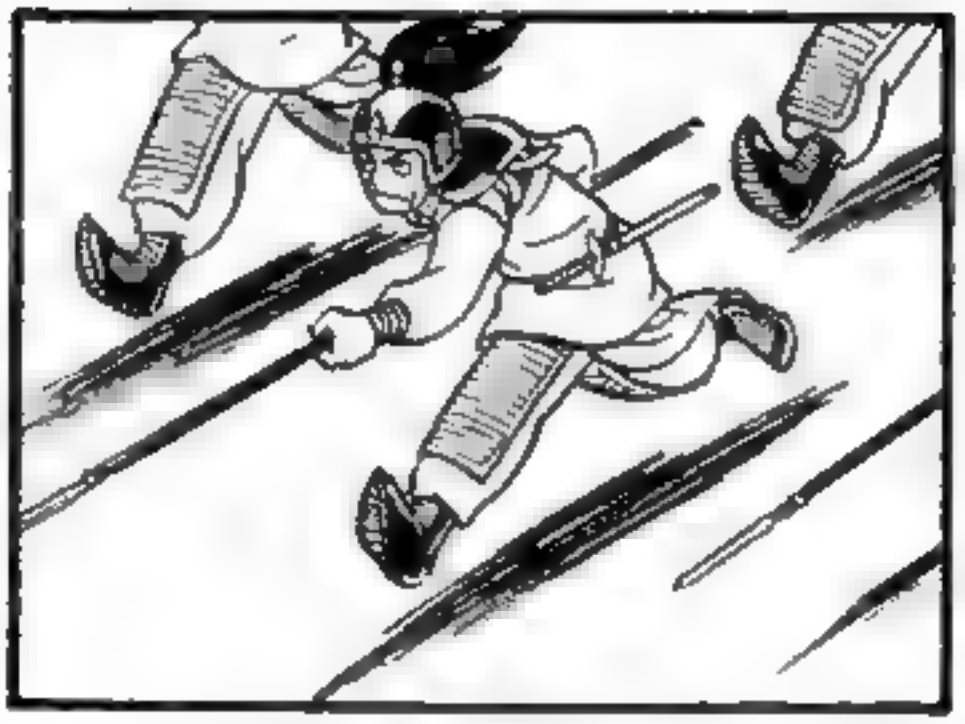
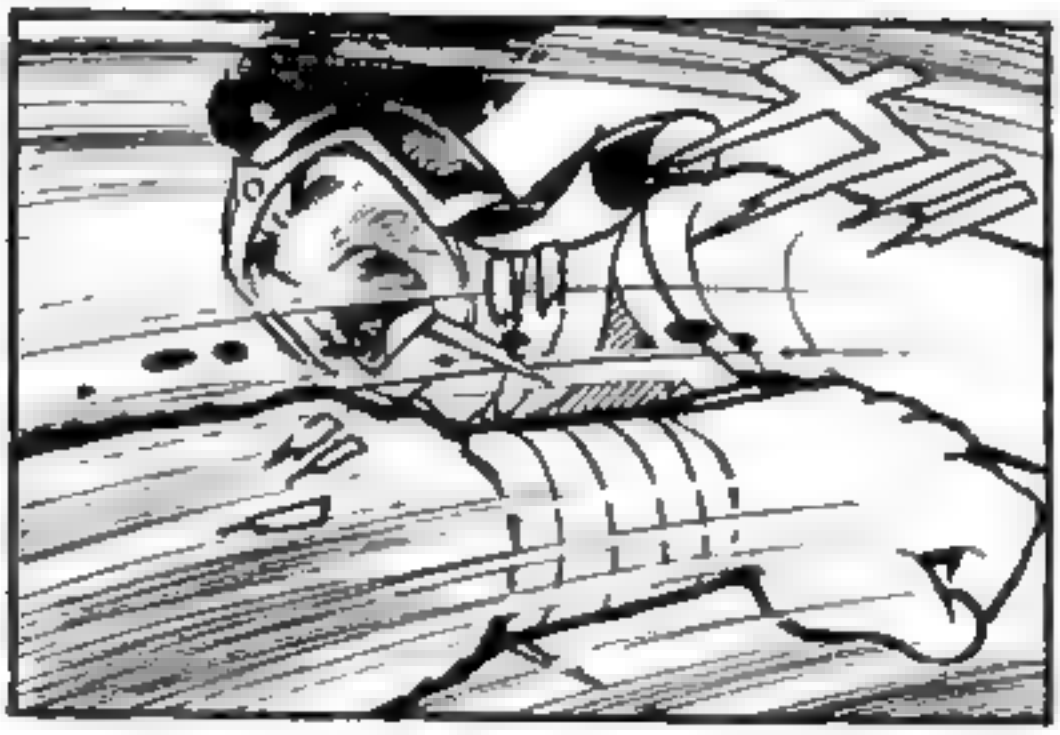
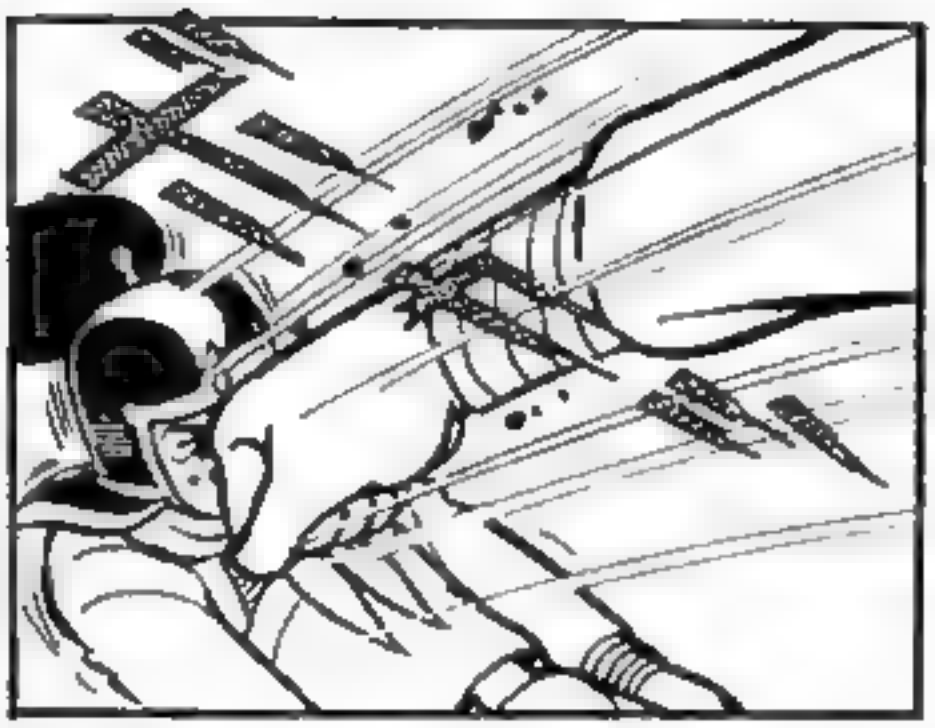
ARREST THAT MAN!
AGHH!



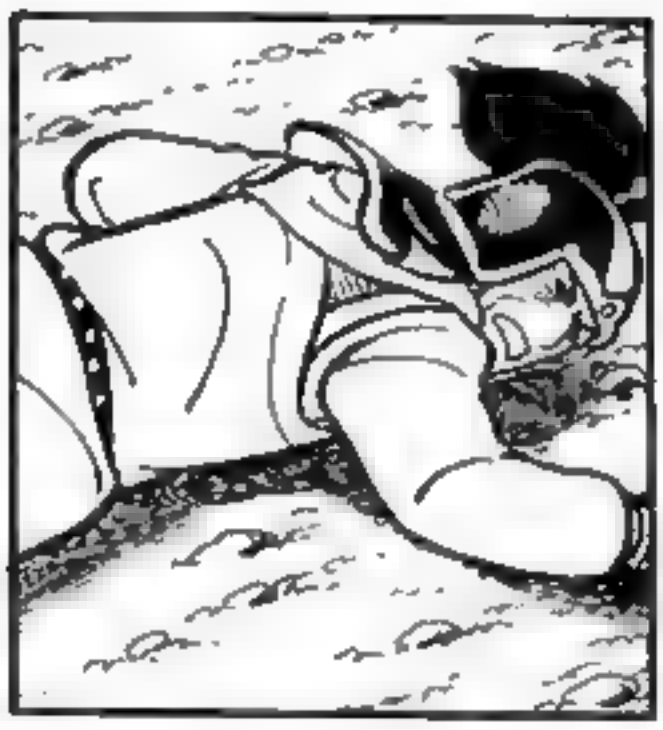
WHERE'S THE IMPERIAL MESSENGER!
MOVE OUT OF MY WAY IF YOU DON'T WANT TO LEAVE WITH BROKEN BONES OR WORSE!

DENSE FOOLS...!





AGHHH!



HE MUST BE IN THERE.

AND YOU, POUR ME A GLASS.

AH!

COME ON, MY DARLING, COME CLOSER. I DON'T BITE, YOU KNOW.

Y-YOU'RE THAT SERVANT OF LIU BEI, ZHANG FEI!

JUST WHO LET YOU INSIDE!?

KYAA!

IT'S NOT THAT SOMEONE LET ME IN. I LET MYSELF IN SINCE I COULD NO LONGER BEAR IT.

Y-YOU IMPUDENT...

AGHHH, W-WHAT ARE YOU DOING!?

OTHERS MIGHT BE AFRAID OF YOU BUT UNFORTUNATELY FOR YOU, I'M NOT.

S-SOMEBODY! HELP ME!!

IT'S TIME TO TEACH YOU A LESSON.

HMM, THIS SEEMS LIKE A GOOD TREE.

AGHH!

W-WHAT IS THIS INSOLENCE!?

EEK!

GAHHHH!!!

LISTEN WELL. THE REASON WHY THE WORLD IS IN SUCH CHAOS TODAY IS BECAUSE OF YOU ROTTEN PIGS RUNNING AMOK.

BUT AFTER TODAY, YOU SHALL KNOW OF ZHANG FEI, WHO LISTENS NOT TO AUTHORITY AND WEALTH, BUT ONLY OF RIGHTEOUSNESS AND THE PEOPLE'S WILL.

THERE MAY BE SOLDIERS TO PUNISH THE REBELS BUT THERE IS NO ONE TO DO THE SAME FOR YOU, WHICH IS WHY YOU KNOW NO FEAR.

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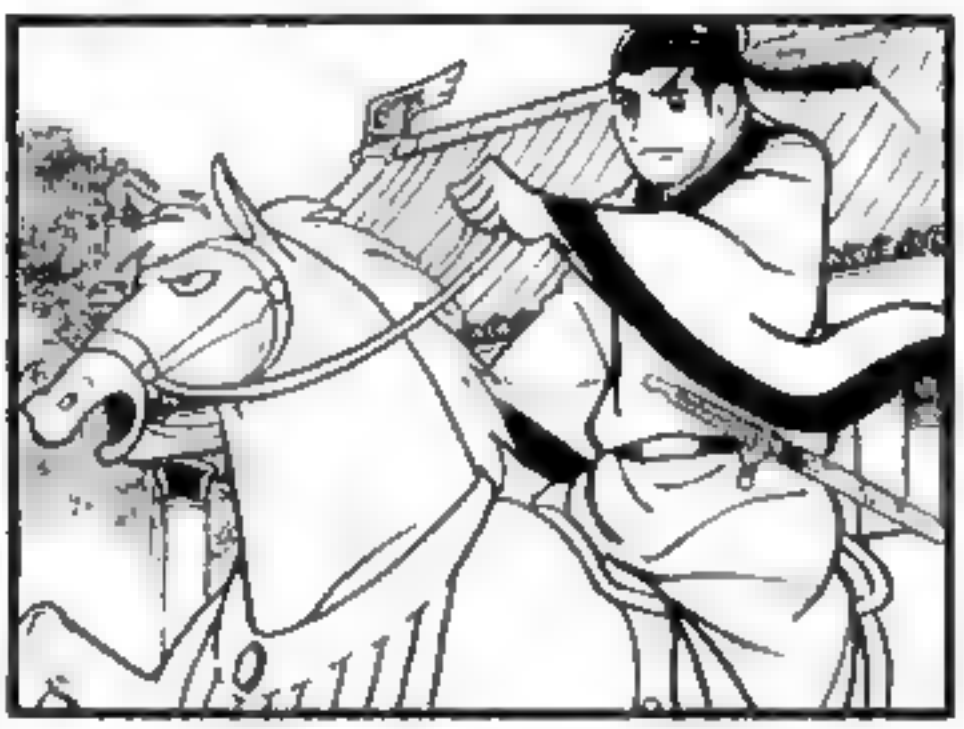
YOU'RE THE SAME AS THOSE CORRUPT TEN ATTENDANTS!

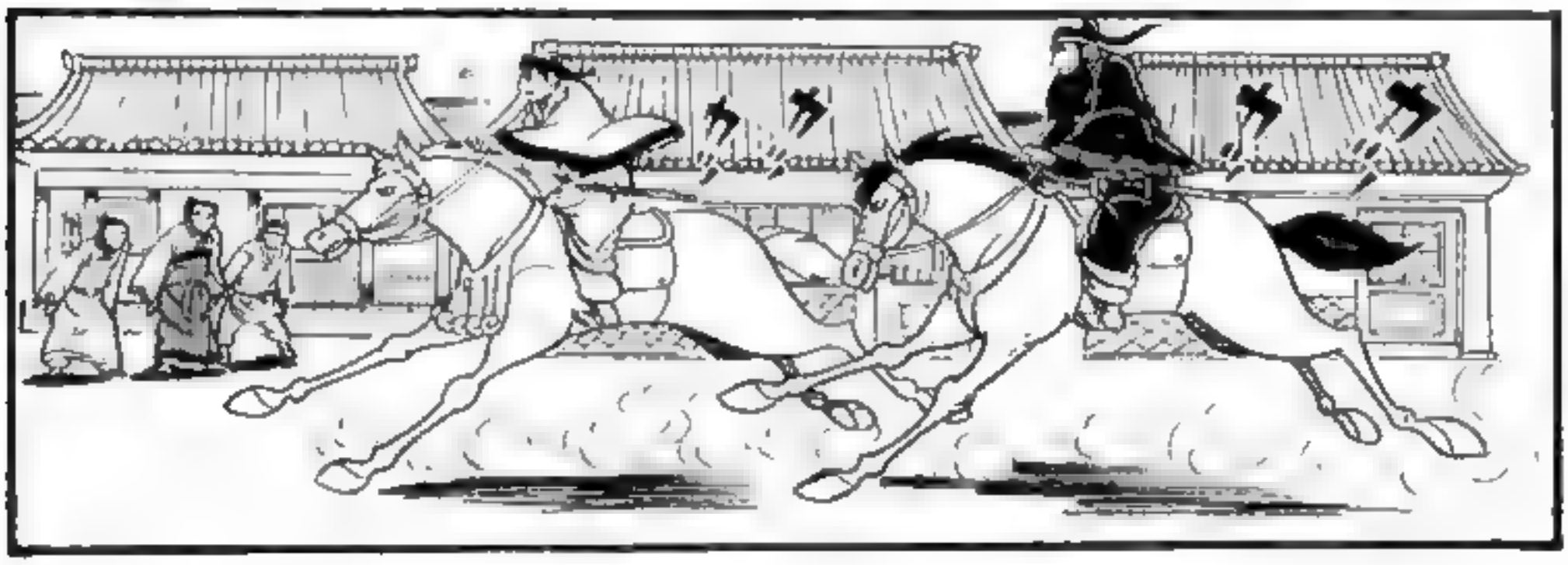
SILENCE! THE PAIN YOU FEEL IS NOT EVEN A FRACTION OF WHAT THE PEOPLE SUFFERING FROM SCUMBAGS LIKE YOU UNDERGO THROUGH!

P-PLEASE FORGIVE ME! I'LL DO ANYTHING YOU SAY!

YES.
GUAN YU.

HE IS BEATING HIM TO DEATH, SIR.
ZHANG FEI IS DOING WHAT TO THE IMPERIAL MESSENGER!?





LIKE I'D LET THAT HAPPEN!

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SOMEBODY! HELP!

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UGH...

AH!

ZHANG FEI, STOP THIS AT ONCE!

JUST WHAT HAVE YOU DONE.

BRO-THER.

THIS IS THE FACE OF A MESSENGER SENT BY HIS HIGHNESS? HOW SORRY YOU LOOK. JUST A PETTY MAN HIDING BEHIND THE EMPEROR'S AUTHORITY.

JUST UNTIE ME, I'LL DO ANYTHING YOU WISH.

OHH, LIU BEI. PLEASE SAVE ME FROM THIS MAN.

IT IS USE-LESS TO HELP A MAN LIKE HIM.

I AM NOT UNTYING HIM JUST FOR MY OWN PER-SONAL GAIN. I AM ONLY DOING THIS BECAUSE OF HIS MAJESTY'S...

WHAT!?

BROTHER LIU BEI, ARE YOU REALLY GOING TO UNTIE THIS MAN?

I UNDERSTAND THAT TOO BUT JUST WHO WOULD UNDERSTAND AND SYMPATHIZE WITH YOUR SITUATION?

BUT THERE'S NO OTHER CHOICE.

NO, THAT IS WRONG!

WE RISKED OUR LIVES FIGHTING THE REBELS, ACHIEVING GREAT VICTORIES YET ALL WE HAVE TO SHOW FOR IT IS YOU BEING APPOINTED A MERE COUNTY MAGISTRATE. AND, ONCE YOU UNTIE THIS MAN, YOU WILL SOON BE IMPRISONED.

WE ROSE UP FOR THE SAKE OF ALL THE PEOPLE OF THIS LAND!

WE DID NOT RISE UP JUST TO GOVERN OVER SOME SMALL VILLAGE.

I HAVE BEEN THINKING EVER SINCE THIS MAN CAME. THERE IS NO NEED FOR US TO BRIBE HIM JUST SO WE CAN LIVE OUT THE REST OF OUR DAYS IN THIS SMALL VILLAGE.

A THORNBUSH IS NO PLACE FOR A PHOENIX TO ROOST IN.

BROTHER LIU BEI, AS THE OLD PROVER GOES:

BROTHER GUAN YU.

MY SHORT-TEMPERED BROTHER MERELY CARRIED OUT MY THOUGHTS INTO ACTION.

WE HAVE CHOSEN THE WRONG PLACE TO LIVE!

YOU ARE MY BROTHER INDEED! YOU ELOQUENTLY EXPRESSED EXACTLY HOW I FEEL!

WHAT!

GUAN YU, ZHANG FEI. TO BE HONEST, THAT IS MORE OR LESS HOW I FELT AS WELL.

AS YOU SAID, THIS IS NOT THE PLACE FOR US!

BUT I WAS WORRIED OVER WHETHER OR NOT MY DECISIONS MIGHT BRING YOU TWO UNNECCESSARY TROUBLE.

AS FOR YOU, YOU ARE NOTHING BUT A PATHETIC AND WICKED MAN WHO BRINGS SUFFERING TO THE PEOPLE. I WOULD CUT YOUR HEAD IF NOT FOR THE FACT THAT IT MIGHT SCARE SOME OF THE LIVESTOCK. SO I SHALL AT LEAST SPARE YOUR LIFE.

ZHANG FEI, GUAN YU. I MUST HAVE MADE YOU TWO WORRY QUITE A BIT.

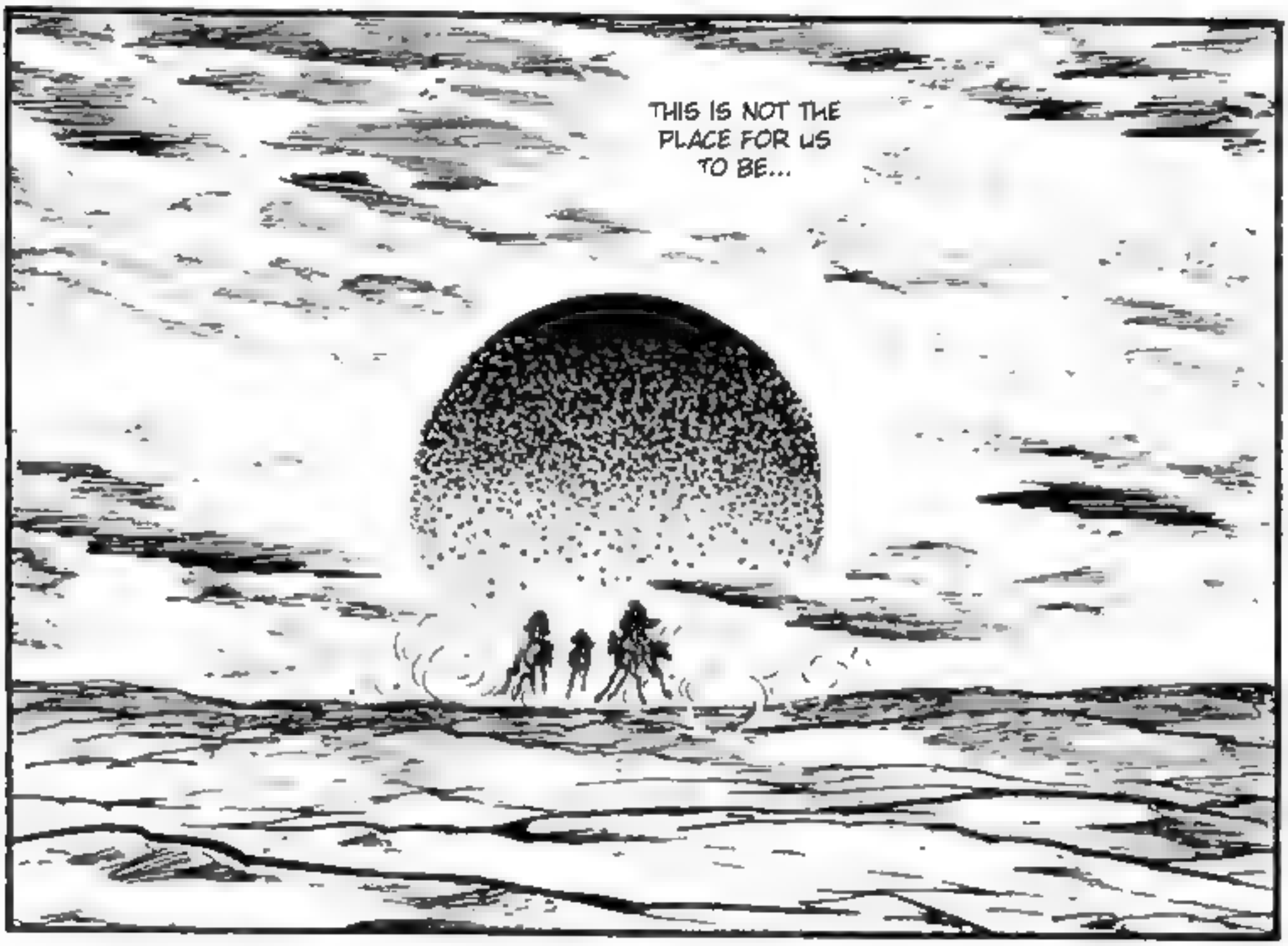
BROTHER LIU BEI!

HOW DARE YOU! I WON'T FORGET THIS HUMILIATION!

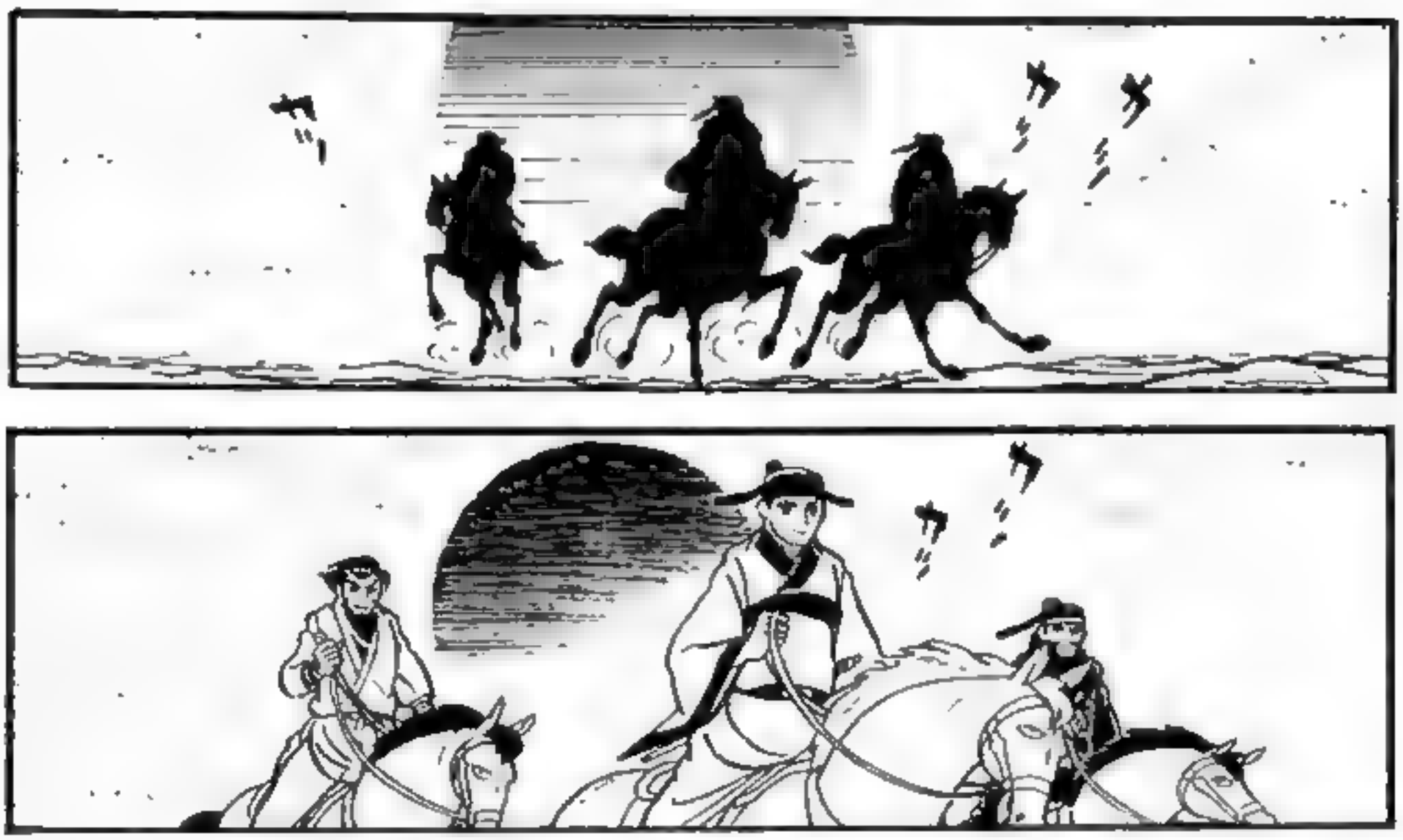
YES!

LET US GO, GUAN YU, ZHANG FEI.

WE ROSE UP
FOR THE WILL
OF ALL PEOPLE
IN THIS LAND...


THIS IS NOT THE
PLACE FOR US
TO BE...

THE WANDERING



HAHAHA, YOU TALK BIG, ZHANG FEI.

IT WOULD BE IMPOSSIBLE FOR THERE TO NOT BE A PLACE FOR US TO STAY IN THIS VAST LAND.

JUST LEAVE IT TO ME!

THEN LEAD THE WAY, BROTHER.

O-OWW OWW OWW OWW OWWWWWWW!

PLEASE JUST ENDURE THE PAIN FOR A BRIEF MOMENT, SIR.

OWWW!

MY BEHIND AS WELL.

WHAT!

HE HAS ALREADY LEFT THIS TOWN, SIR.

WHERE IS XUANDE?

YOU FOOLS, HOW COULD YOU FAIL TO ARREST THEM!?

I AM A MESSENGER SENT BY THE EMPEROR HIMSELF!

YES...

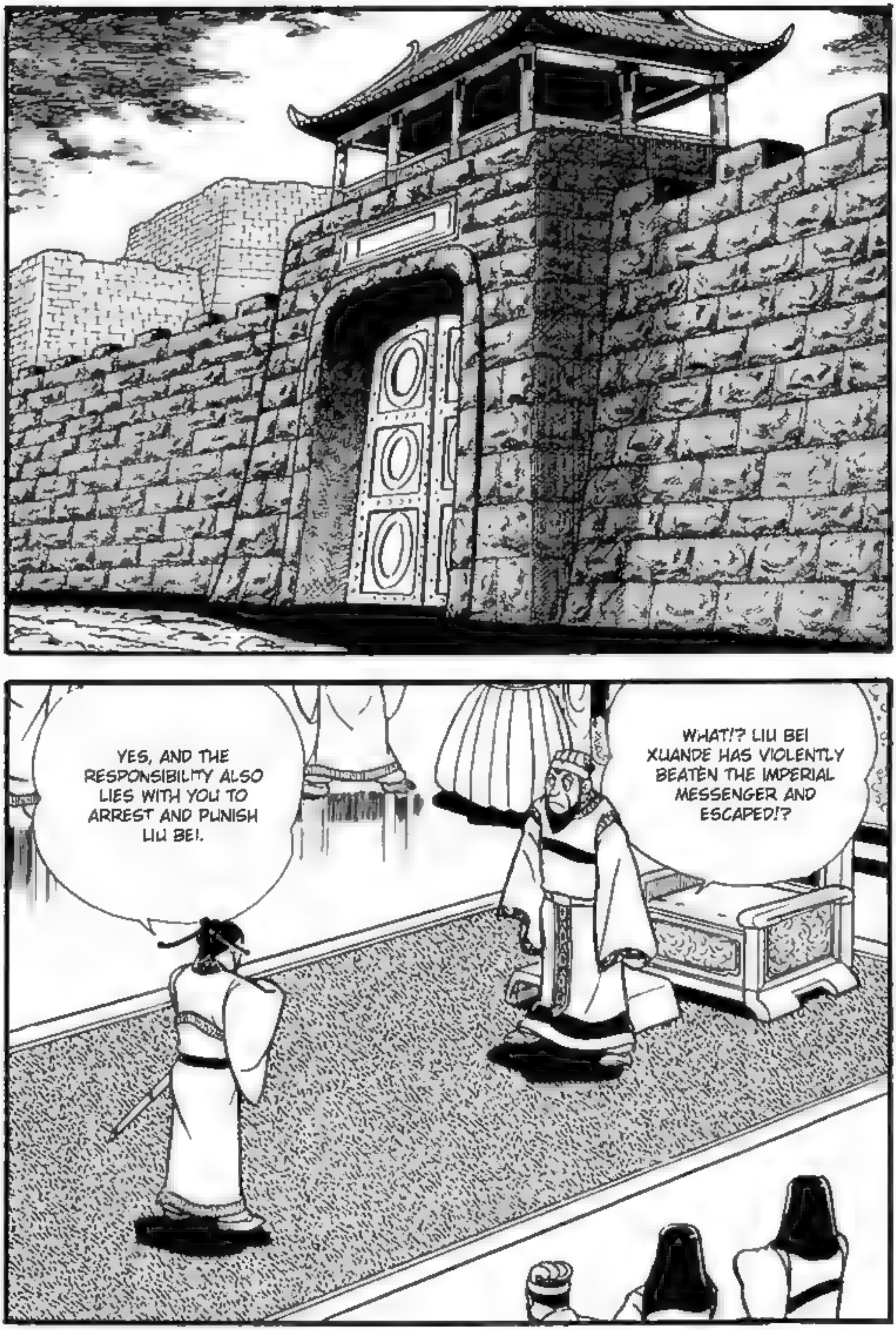
SO THAT ZHANG FEI HAS ALSO ESCAPED!?

Y-YES SIR!

TO MAKE ME A FOOL IS EQUIVALENT TO MAKING THE EMPEROR A FOOL!

SEND A MESSENGER TO DINGZHOU RIGHT AWAY!

HMM, I GUESS I'LL TELL THE GOVERNOR OF DINGZHOU TO ARREST HIM.


YES, AND THE RESPONSIBILITY ALSO LIES WITH YOU TO ARREST AND PUNISH LIU BEI.
WHAT!? LIU BEI XUANDE HAS VIOLENTLY BEATEN THE IMPERIAL MESSENGER AND ESCAPED!?

I UNDERSTAND. I SHALL SEND OUT SOLDIERS TO ARREST HIM RIGHT AWAY.

TO THINK THAT XUANDE WHO WAS SO HIGHLY RATED BY HIS PEOPLE WOULD DO SUCH A THING!

YES SIR!

LEAVE NOW AND ARREST THAT LIU BEI AND HIS COMPANIONS, GUAN YU AND ZHANG FEI!

BROTHER, THIS MIGHT NOT BE THE BEST TASTING STUFF, BUT HAVE SOME DRIED MEAT.

I WAS RAISED IN A POOR HOUSEHOOLD, I AM NOT A PICKY EATER.

I LEFT MY HOME WITH BIG ASPIRATIONS BUT HERE I AM NOW, JUST A MERE WANDERER.

HMM, NOW THAT I THINK ABOUT IT, I WONDER HOW MY MOTHER IS DOING?

I'LL GO GET SOME WATER.

I'D PROBA-BLY BE SCOLDED BY MOTHER.

HM!?

BROTHER!

SOLDIERS!

WHAT SHOULD WE DO? OUR HORSES' FOOTPRINTS WILL SURELY BE FOUND BY THEM.

HMM, BUT WE MUST NOT FIGHT THEM. IF WE DO AND HAPPEN TO KILL ONE OF THE SOLDIERS, WE WILL BE BRANDED WITH TREASON.

SOLDIERS FROM DINGZHOU THEY MUST BE HERE TO CATCH US!

WHAT IS IT, ZHANG FEI?

ALRIGHT.

GUAN YU, LET US MAKE THEM LOSE THEIR SPIRITS.

SO THEN, ALL WE HAVE TO DO IS JUST CHASE THEM AWAY WITHOUT KILLING THEM, RIGHT?

JUST WAIT HERE A LITTLE WHILE, BROTHER.

THERE'S NO NEED FOR YOU TO SEARCH ANYMORE.

NO DOUBT ABOUT IT, THERE WERE THREE HORSES THAT PASSED HERE RECENTLY.

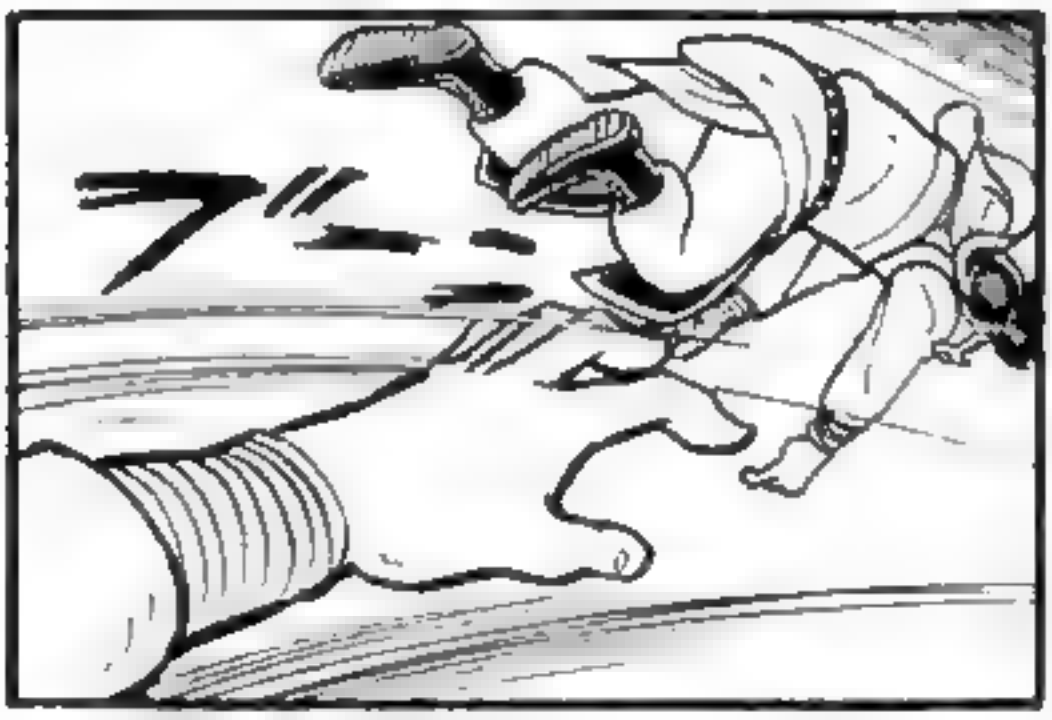
THAT'S THEM!

JUST GO BACK QUIETLY.

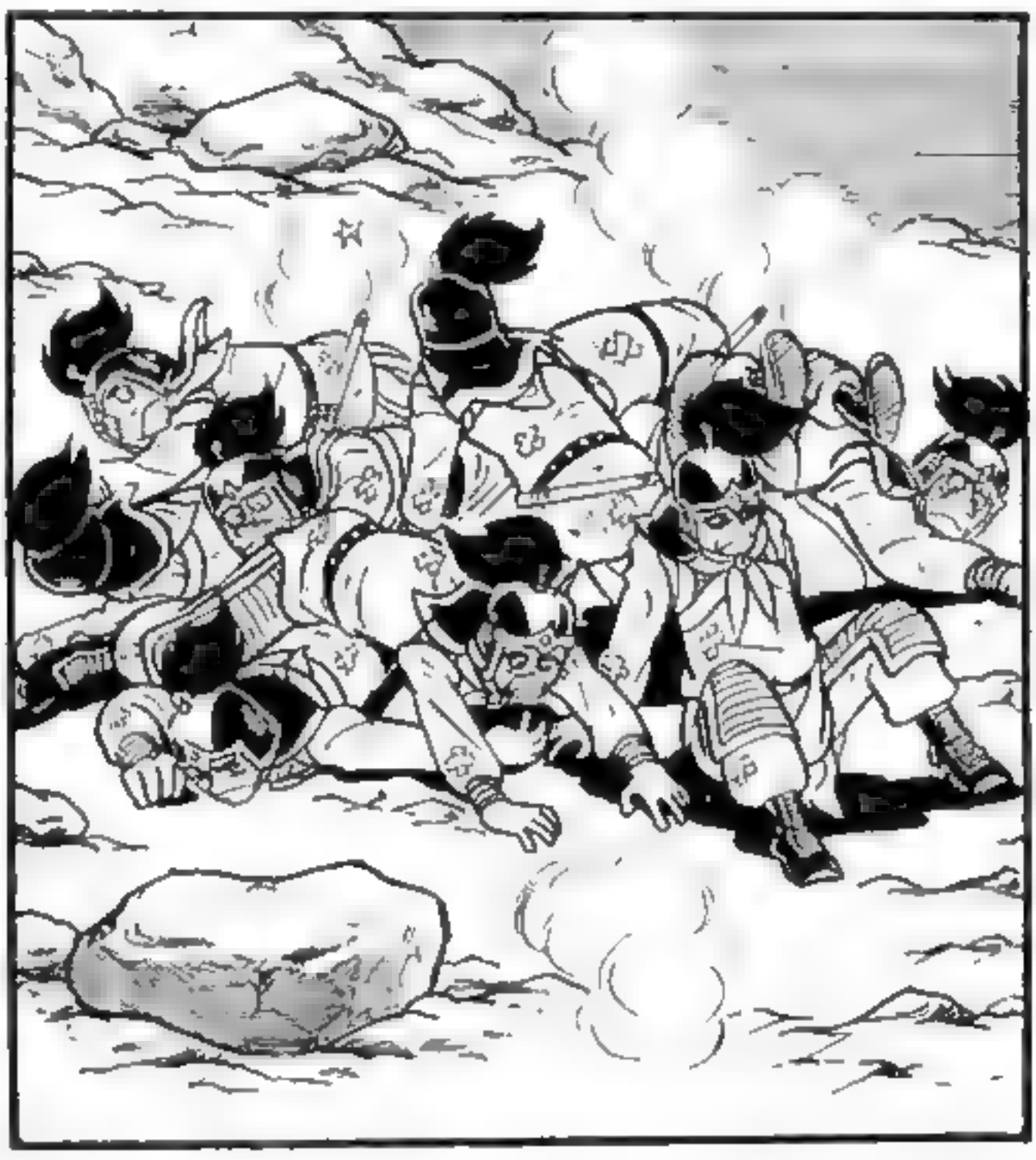
CATCH THEM!

JUST REPORT BACK TO THE GOVERNOR THAT WE WERE TOO MUCH FOR YOU TO HANDLE!

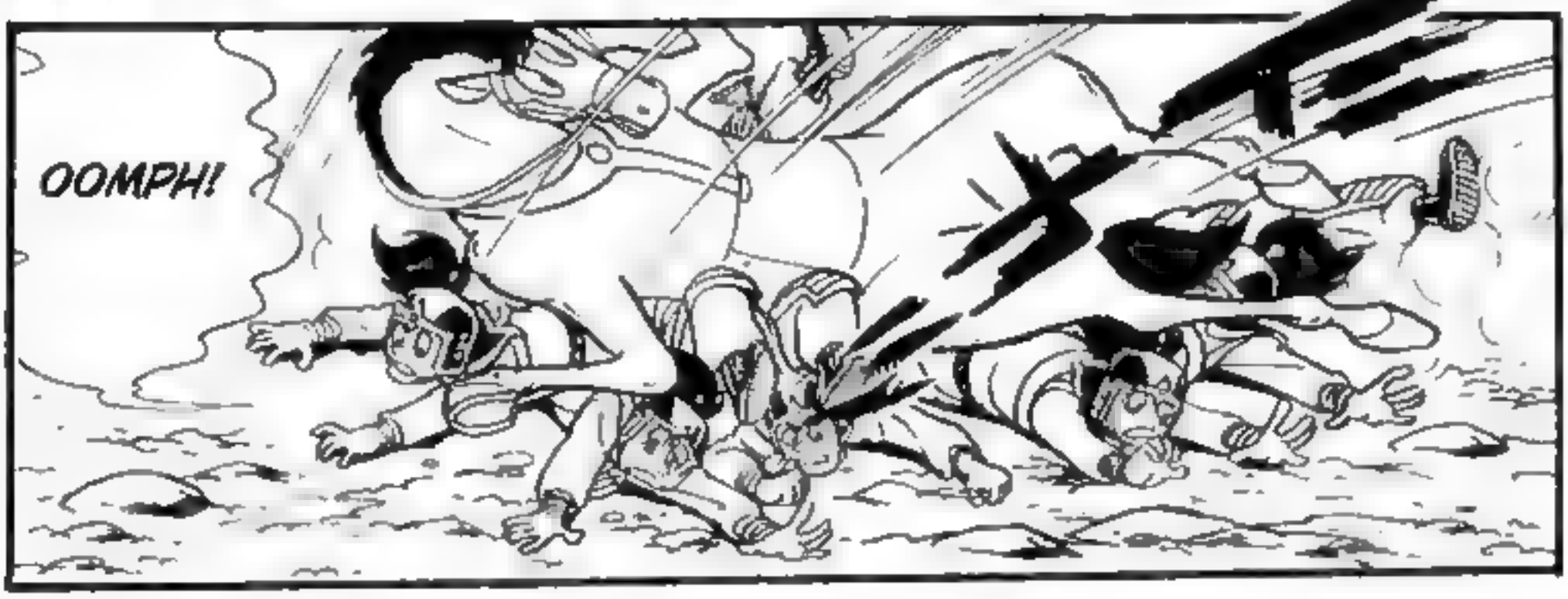
COME ON, IF YOU THINK YOU'VE GOT GUTS, STEP RRIIIGGHHT UP!



HEH HEH. LET ME GIVE YOU AN EXTRA GIFT.



AGH!


OOMPH!

THEN SCRAM!

GAHHH!

BUT NEXT TIME WE WON'T BE SO NICE.

Y-YES!

ALRIGHT? WE WENT EASY ON YOU TODAY.

WITH THAT, WE SHOULD BE SAFE FOR AWHILE.

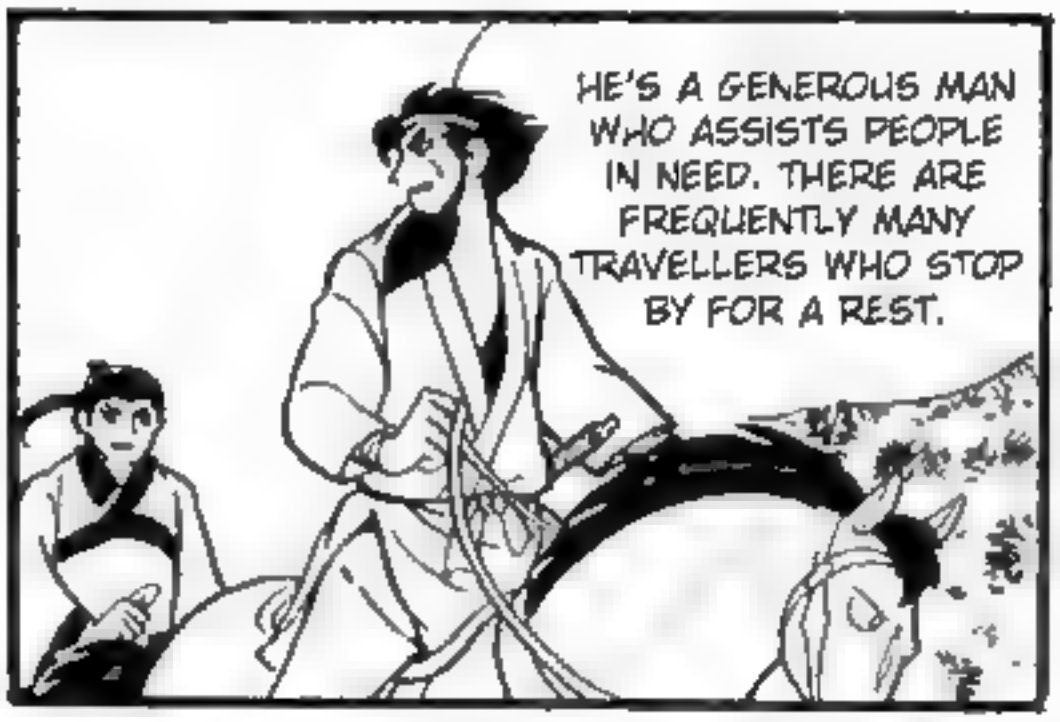
HEH HEH, WE JUST BRUSHED THEM GENTLY A LITTLE BIT.

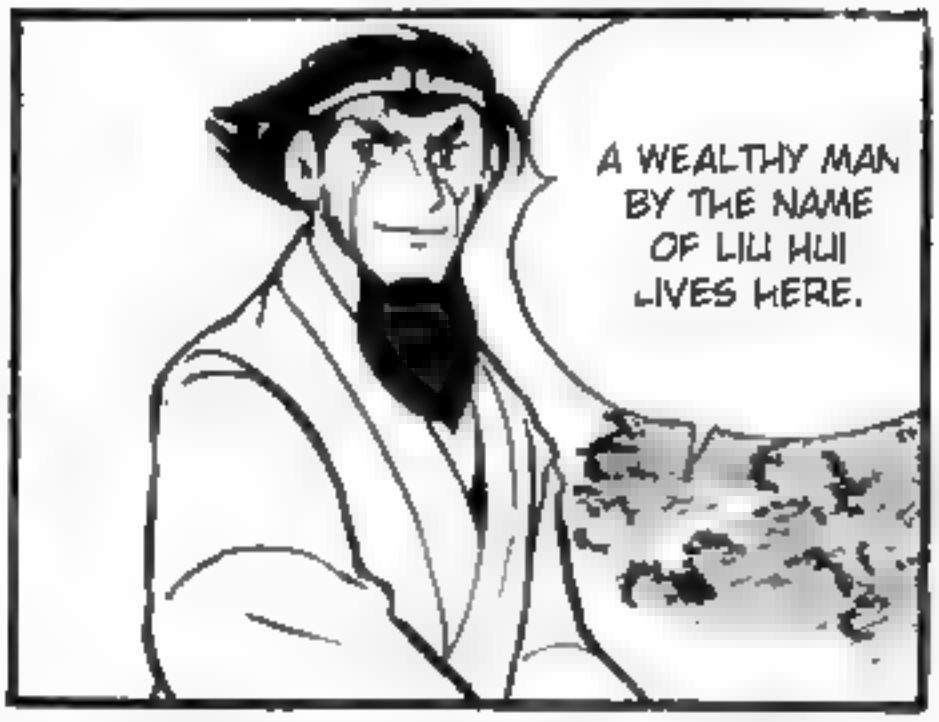
YOU WEREN'T TOO ROUGH WITH THEM, RIGHT?

ALRIGHT, LET US CONTINUE OUR JOURNEY.

WHAT A HUGE ESTATE.

THIS IS IT, BROTHER.


HE'S A GENEROUS MAN WHO ASSISTS PEOPLE IN NEED. THERE ARE FREQUENTLY MANY TRAVELLERS WHO STOP BY FOR A REST.


A WEALTHY MAN BY THE NAME OF LIU HUI LIVES HERE.

I'M SURE HE'LL WELCOME US AS WELL.

I HAVE HEARD A GREAT DEAL ABOUT YOU FROM ZHANG FEI.

IS THAT SO?

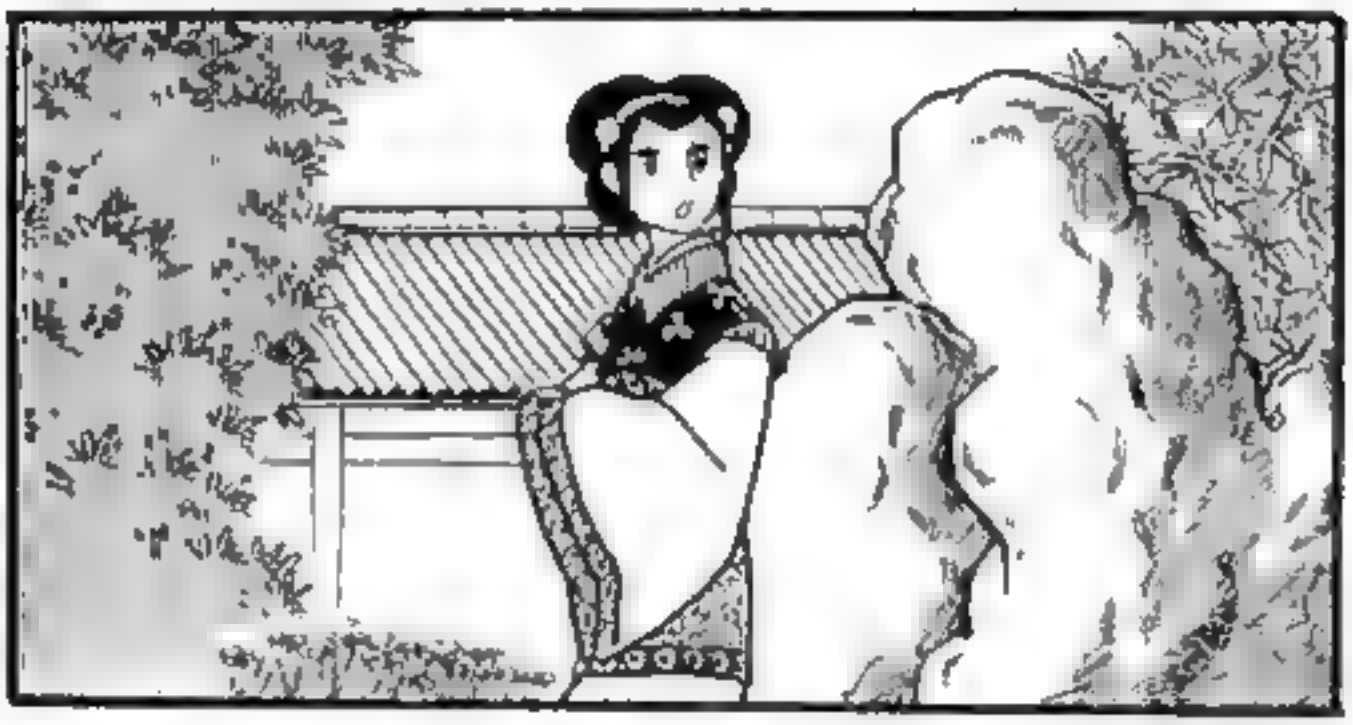
IT IS A PLEASURE TO MEET YOU. I AM CALLED LIU HUI.

I AM INDEBTED TO YOU.

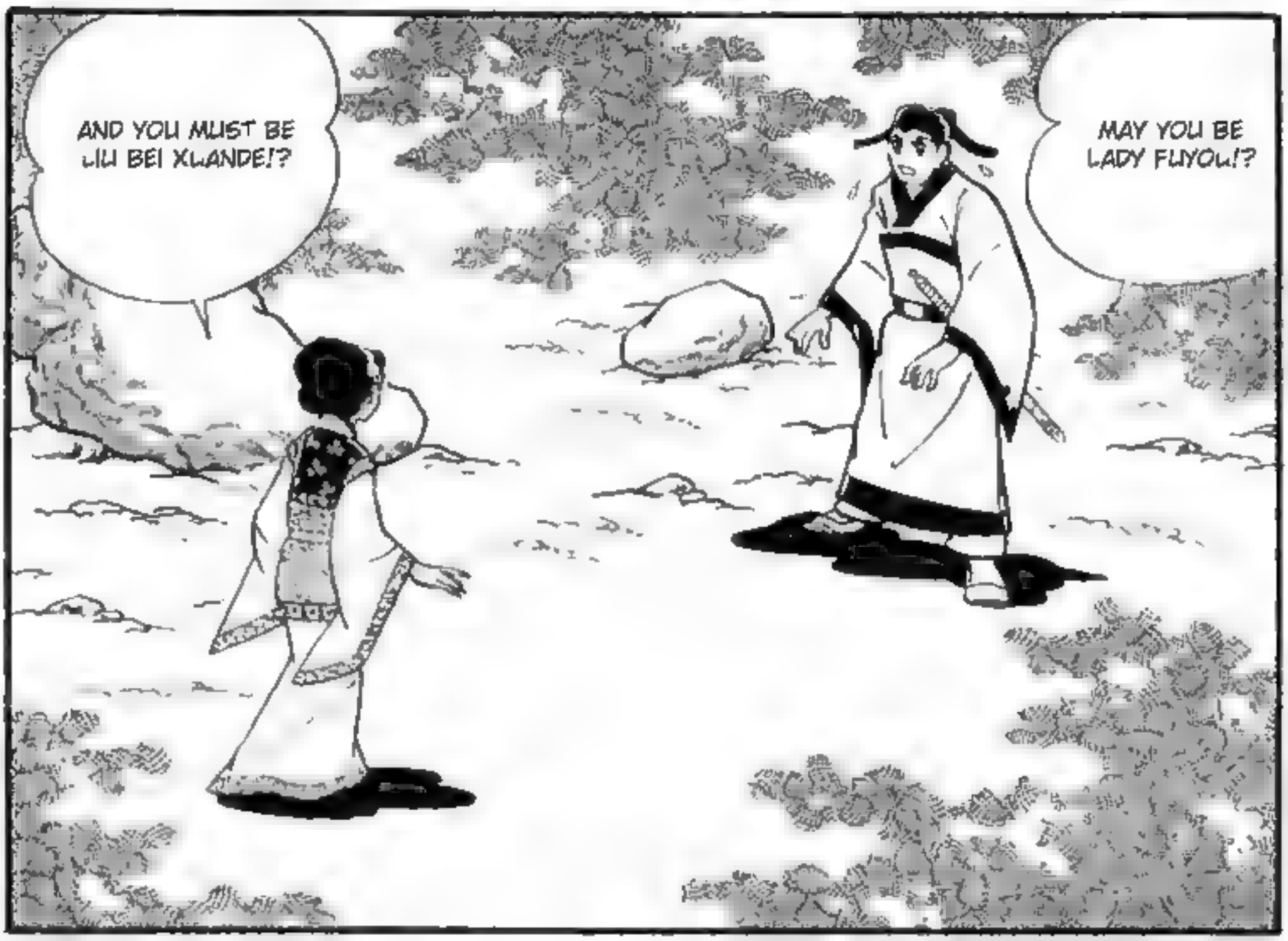
PLEASE FEEL FREE TO MAKE YOURSELVES AT HOME. I WILL NOT MIND EVEN IF YOU WERE TO STAY HERE 2 OR 3 YEARS.

HAHA!

SO THERE TRULY ARE GENEROUS PEOPLE IN THIS WORLD.



AH!


AND YOU MUST BE LIU BEI XUANDE!?
MAY YOU BE LADY FUYOU!?

HOW COULD I EVER FORGET THE MAN WHO SAVED MY LIFE BY PROTECTING ME FROM THE YELLOW SCARVES?

YOU'VE REMEMBERED MY NAME.

I SEE.

THEN IT IS NO WONDER THAT ZHANG FEI, WHO WORKED FOR YOUR FAMILY, WOULD KNOW OF THIS HOUSEHOLD.

THIS HOUSEHOLD IS A RELATIVE OF MY KOU FAMILY, WHICH HAS NOW BEEN WIPED OUT SAVE FOR ME. IN THE PAST, THEY HAVE ASSISTED MY FAMILY BY SENDING SOLDIERS AND HORSES.

TO THINK THAT I WOULD MEET YOU HERE...

IT IS THE SAME FOR ME...

BUT TO MEET YOU BY CHANCE HERE IS LIKE A DREAM.

DO YOU THINK THAT THERE'S SOMETHING OFF ABOUT THE WAY BROTHER LOOKS THESE DAYS?

HE SEEMS SO SILENT THESE DAYS...

WHAT ABOUT BROTHER?

SOMETHING IS NOT RIGHT....

NO, I DON'T THINK THAT'S IT.

MAYBE HE MISSES THE BATTLEFIELD?

WHERE IS HE HEADING OFF TO AT THIS TIME OF THE NIGHT?

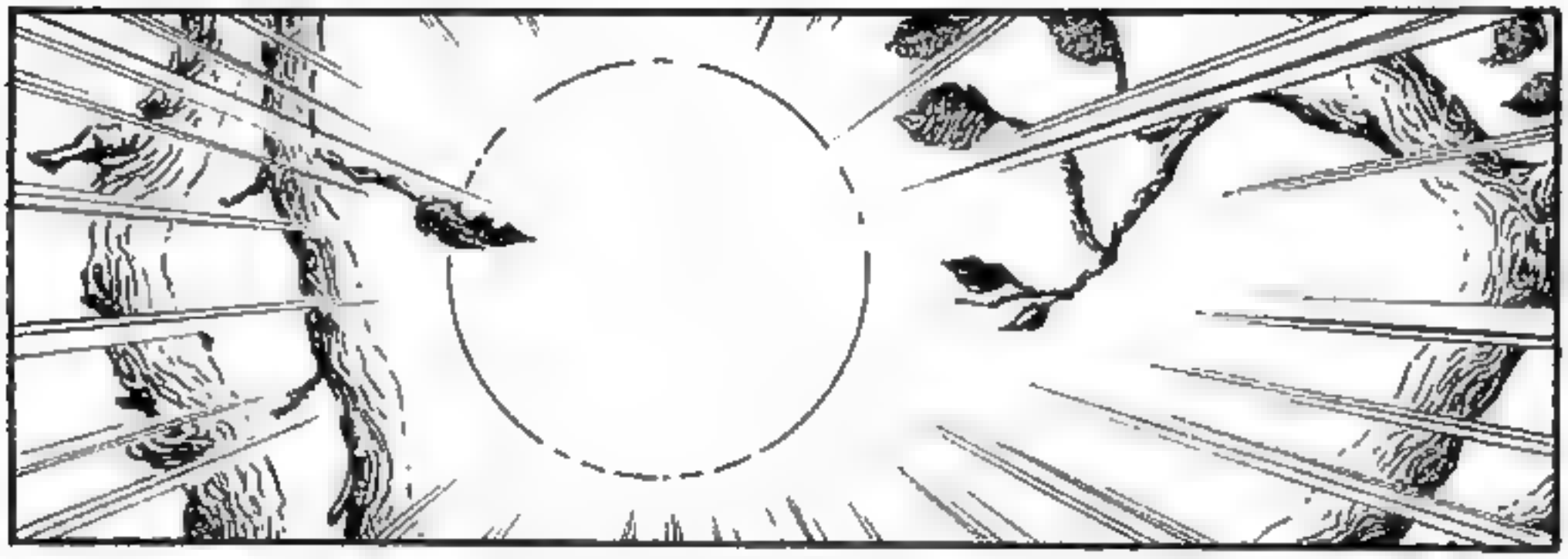
AH!

YES... IT IS RATHER HARD TO SECRETLY COME OUT EVERY NIGHT WHEN LIVING IN THE SAME ROOM AS MY BROTHERS.

THE SAME GOES FOR YOU TOO.
LADY FUYOU, YOU CAME OUT AGAIN.

IT IS THE SAME WITH ME...
HOW STRANGE IT IS. AS SOON AS THE MOON RISES, MY BODY LONGS TO SECRETLY COME OUTSIDE AND MEET WITH YOU...

WHAT A BEAUTIFUL FULL MOON. I WISH FOR IT TO BE LIKE THIS FOR ETERNITY.



WELL, WELL, WELL... WHAT IS THIS? GUAN YU? DRINKING IN THE MORNING?

I NEED IT VERY BADLY RIGHT NOW.

WHAT WAS IT?
AND I MUST SAY, I WAS VERY DISSAP-POINTED IN HIM.

I SECRETLY FOL-LOWED BROTHER LAST NIGHT TO SEE WHAT HE WAS DOING EVERY NIGHT

HE WAS HAVING A LOVER'S TRYST WITH THAT LADY FUYOU.

WELL, MORE OR LESS.

THAT!? YOU MEAN YOU ALREADY KNEW ABOUT THIS!?

OH, THAT?

I NEVER THOUGHT THAT BROTHER XUANDE WAS SUCH A WEAK MAN.

IF THE LORD THAT WE HAVE CHOSEN TO SERVE UNDER HAS HIS HEART SO EASILY SWAYED BY A MERE WOMAN, WHAT CAN HE ACCOMPLISH!?

WHY DID YOU NOT TELL ME ABOUT THIS!? YOU THINK THIS IS THE TIME FOR BROTHER TO FOOLISHLY CHASE AFTER LOVE!?

THAT LADY IS OF THE KOU FAMILY I USED TO SERVE UNDER AND SO SHE'S ESSENTIALLY MY FORMER MASTER.

BUT WHAT!?

W-WELL... I WAS A LITTLE WORRIED OVER THAT TOO BUT...

I MAY NOT SPEAK FROM EXPERIENCE, BUT WHAT'S WRONG FALLING IN LOVE?

IT'S NOT REALLY MY PLACE TO VOICE MY OPINIONS...

ZHANG FEI, WE HAVE CHOSEN TO FOLLOW UNDER XUANDE IN ORDER TO BRING RIGHT AND JUSTICE TO THIS CROOKED WORLD.

HE WILL EVENTUALLY FORGET AND ABANDON THE HAPPINESS OF THE PEOPLE FOR HIS OWN PERSONAL HAPPINESS.

LADY FUYOU MIGHT BE YOUR FORMER MASTER BUT IF BROTHER XUANDE CONTINUES TO MINDLESSLY CHASE AFTER LOVE, DO YOU THINK THIS CROOKED WORLD CAN EVER BE FIXED!?

HAS BROTHER'S AMBITION BEEN DECAYED BY THE TRANQUIL PEACE?

A MAN WHO WISHES TO SAVE THE ENTIRE COUNTRY MUST NOT LOSE HIS FOCUS!

UNFORTUNATELY, I BRING YOU BAD NEWS.

?

AH, GOOD MORNING.

GUAN YU, ZHANG FEI.

AND IT HAS BEEN DECIDED THAT THEY WILL STAY AT THIS RESIDENCE OF MINE FOR SOMETIME.

INSPECTION OFFICERS AND THE GOVERNOR OF DINGZHOU ARE COMING TO CHECK UP ON THIS AREA.

PLEASE EXCUSE US FOR INTRUDING HERE FOR SO LONG. WE WERE THINKING OF LEAVING SOON ANYWAYS.

I SEE. WE ARE MOST GRATEFUL TO YOU FOR LETTING US KNOW BEFOREHAND.

THEY WILL SURELY FIND YOU OUT IF YOU STAY HERE MUCH LONGER.

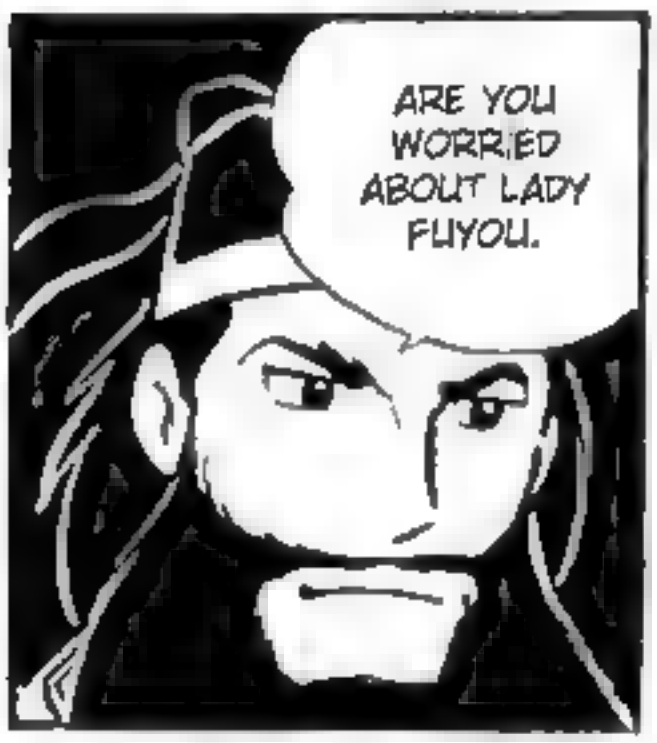
YES.

WHAT FORTUITOUS TIMING, ZHANG FEI LET US USE THIS CHANCE TO LEAVE THIS PLACE.

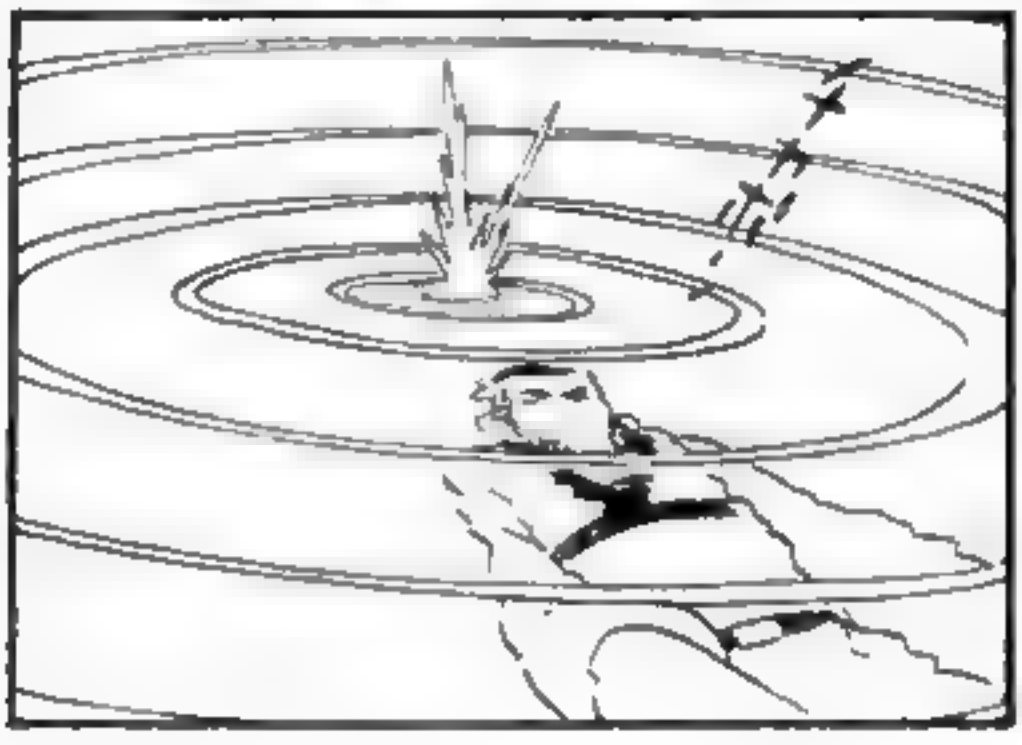
AH, GUAN YU, WHAT IS IT?

BROTHER XUANDE.

IT SEEMS THAT THE GOVERNOR OF DINGZHOU WILL BE STAYING HERE WHILE ON HIS INSPECTION OF THE NEARBY AREA.


ARE YOU WORRIED ABOUT LADY FUYOU.

IS THAT SO.



NO... LOVE IS JUST A PRETTY FLOWER BY THE ROADSIDE.

SO YOUR FALLING IN LOVE WAS JUST ON A WHIM...

NO, THAT'S NOT IT EITHER.

IF THAT IS HOW YOU FEEL, THEN I AM RELIEVED. I WAS WORRIED OVER IF BROTHER HAD FALLEN IN LOVE AND LOST SIGHT OF HIS ASPIRATIONS.

BUT THAT DOES NOT MEAN THAT FALLING IN LOVE WITH LADY FUYOU WAS JUST SOME WHIM OF MINE. I TRULY DO LOVE HER FROM THE BOTTOM OF MY HEART.

I HAVE NEVER ONCE FORGOTTEN THAT I AM THE DESCENDANT OF EMPEROR JING, NOR OF MY FEELINGS WHEN I LEFT MY HOMETOWN WITH GREAT ASPIRATIONS.

I BID YOU GOOD LUCK.

THANK YOU FOR TAKING CARE OF US UNTIL NOW. WE SHALL NEVER FORGET YOUR KINDNESS.

YES.

LET US GO, GUAN YU, ZHANG FEI.

WHAT SHALL WE DO NOW, BROTHER?

I WAS THINKING OF SEEING HOW MY MOTHER IS DOING BACK IN MY HOMETOWN...

I WAS JUST THINKING OF THAT.

WHEN SHOULD WE MEET AGAIN?

THEN LET US LAY LOW FOR NOW.

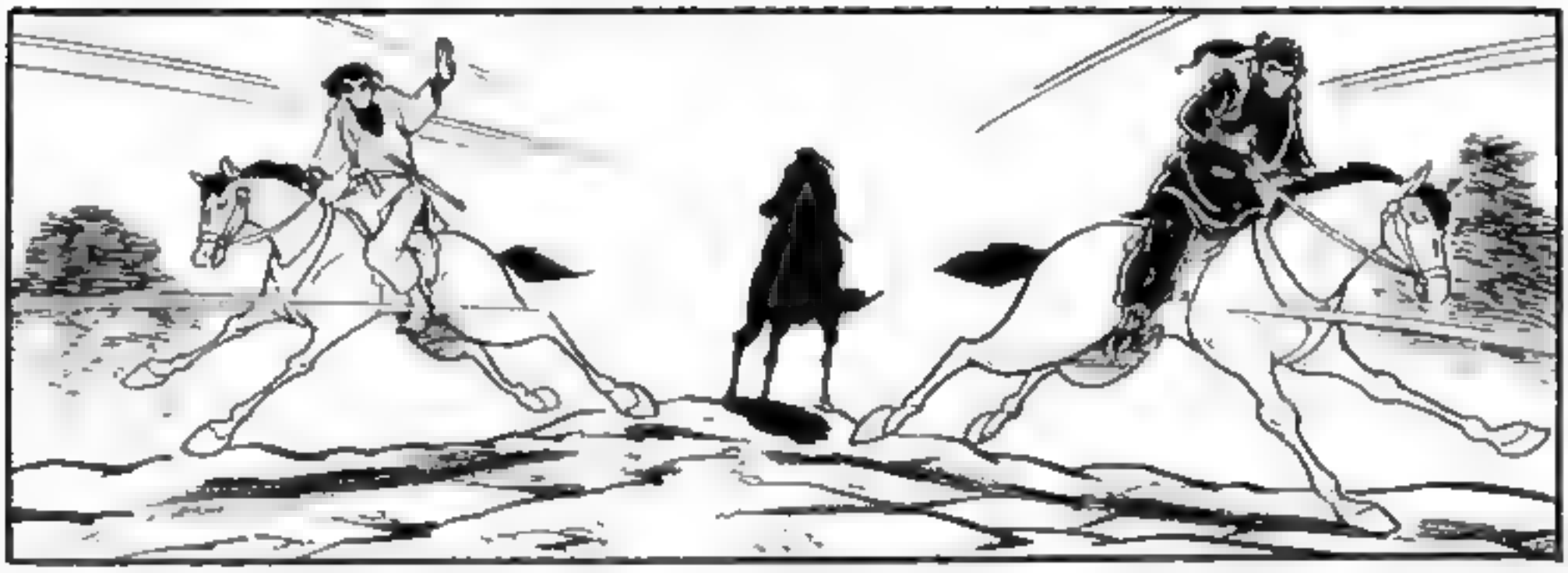
HOW ABOUT IT? LET US SPLIT APART AND GO OUR OWN WAYS FOR A SHORT WHILE AND OBSERVE THE SITUATION OF THE WORLD.

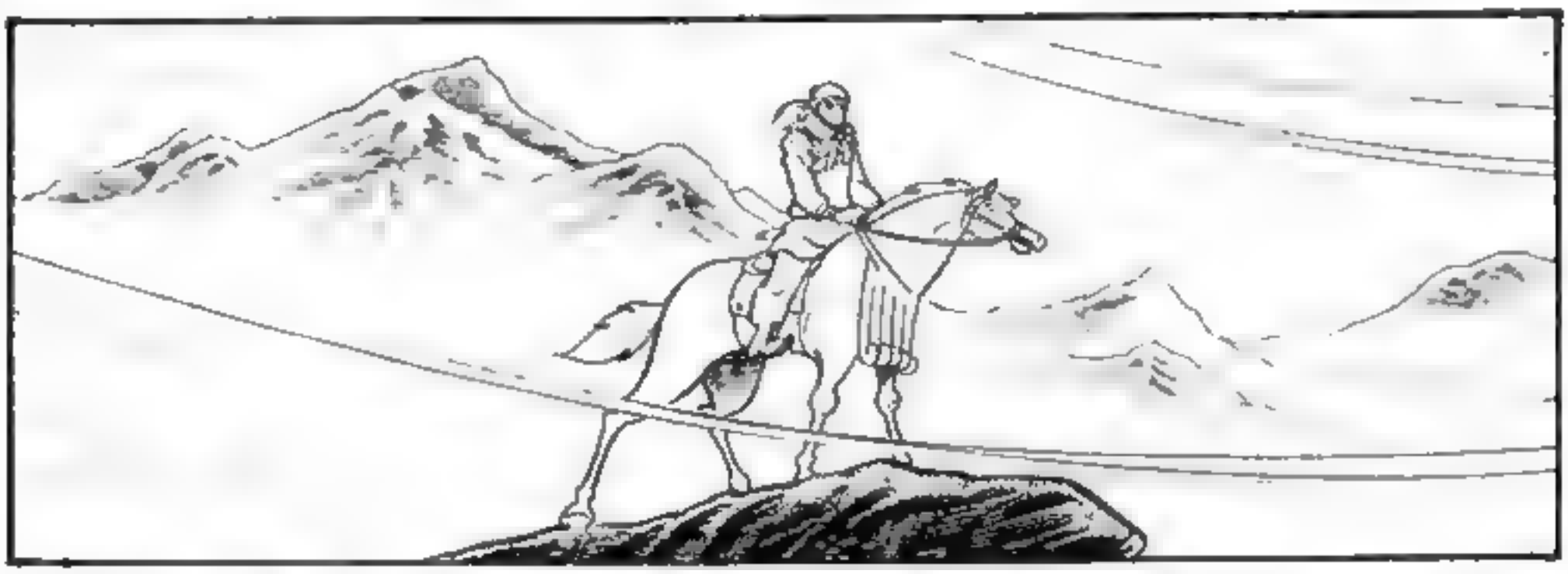
IN THE COOL AUTUMN OF AUGUST

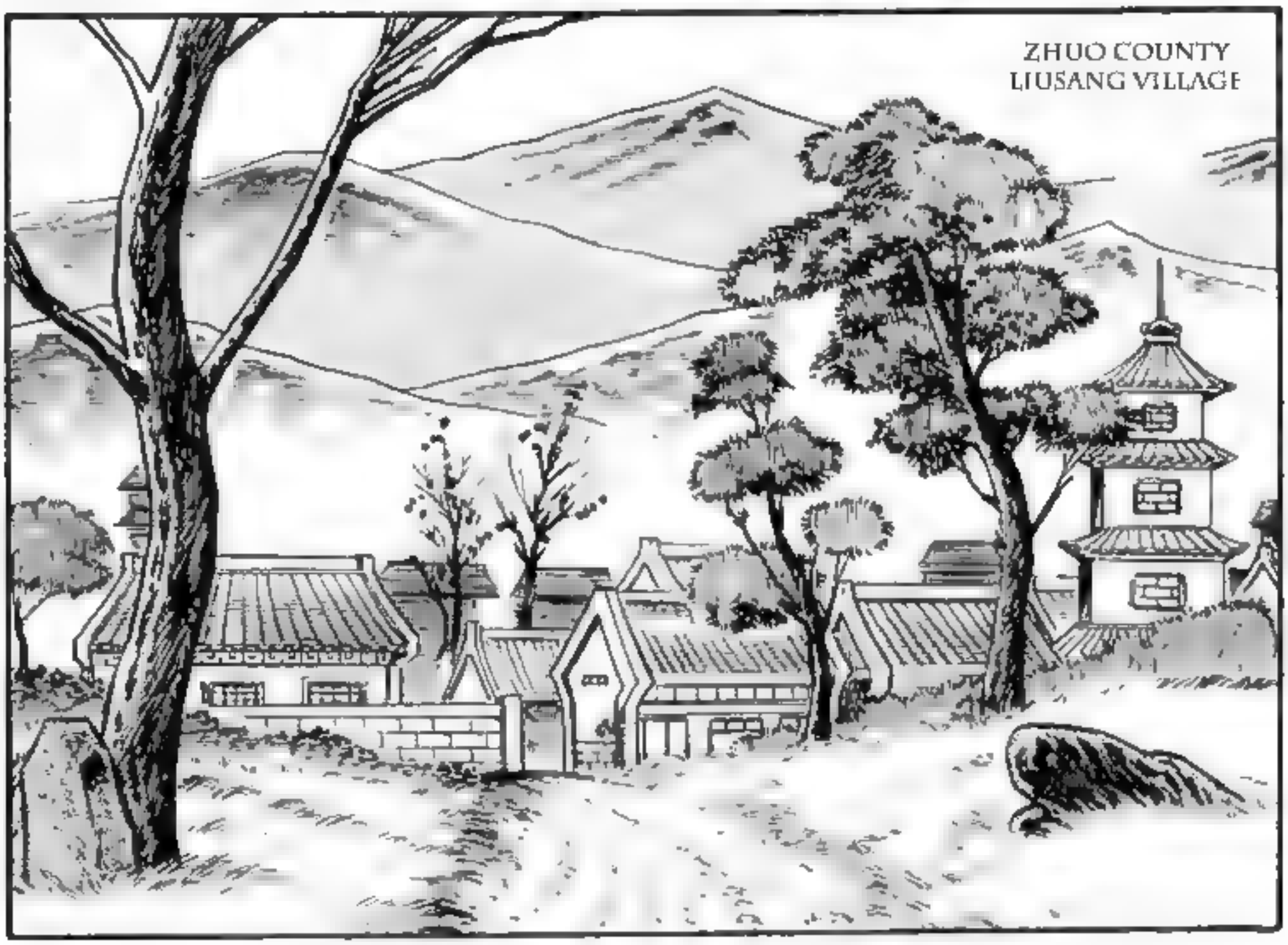
AT MOUNT. WUTAI.

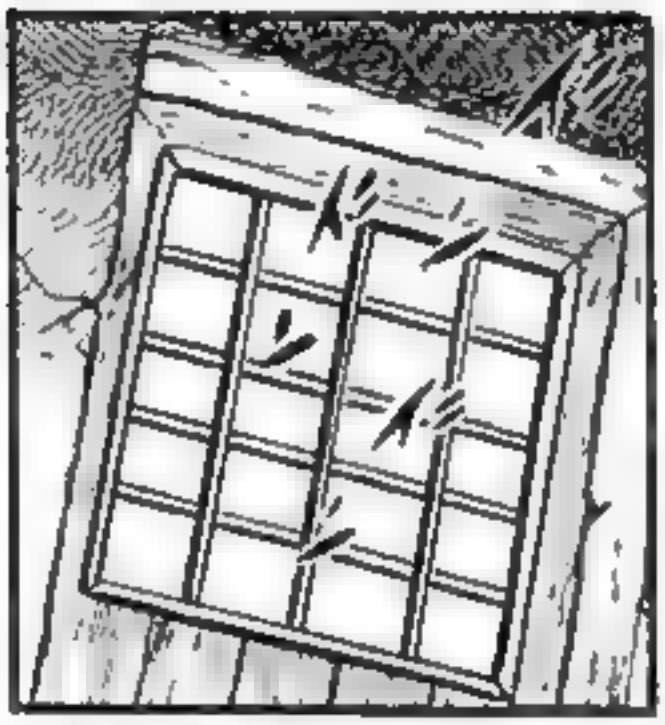
AUGUST IT IS.

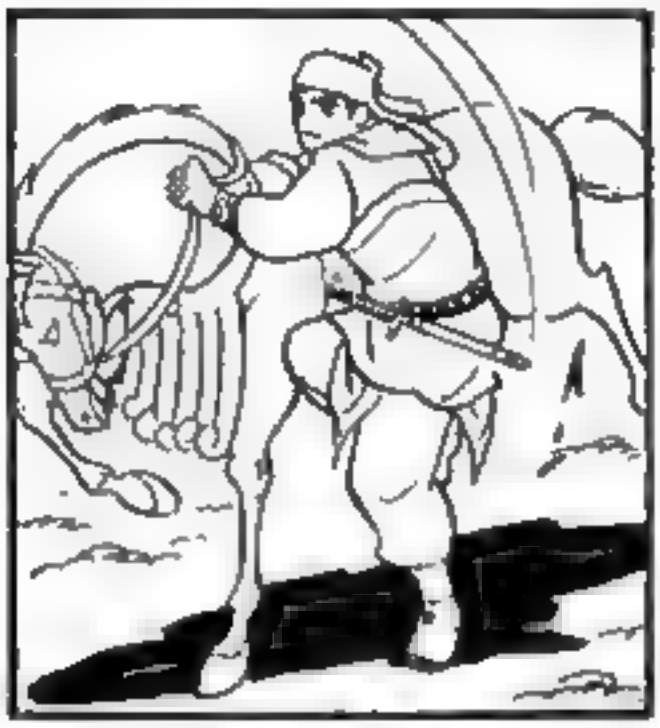
ALRIGHT.

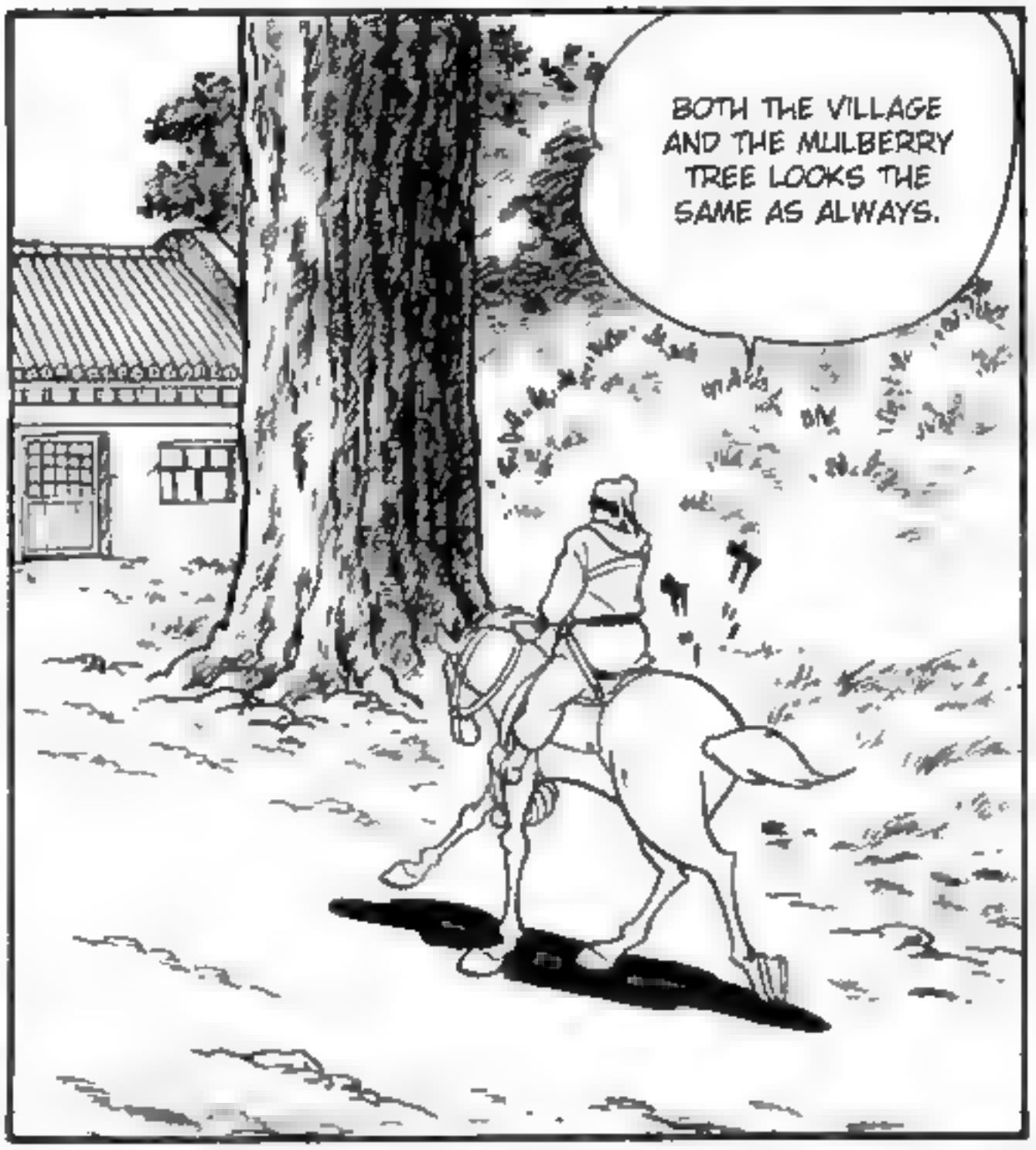





ZHUO COUNTY
LIUSANG VILLAGE






BOTH THE VILLAGE AND THE MULBERRY TREE LOOKS THE SAME AS ALWAYS.

WHO IS IT?

MOTHER!

XUANDE!

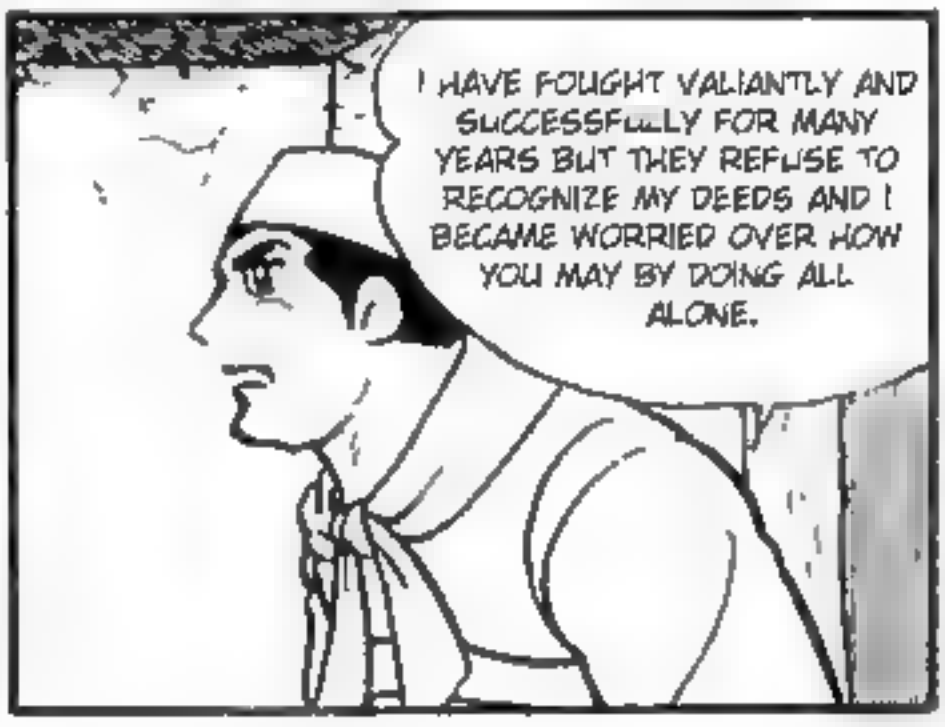
XUANDE, JUST WHY DID YOU COME BACK?

WHAT?

YOU MUST HAVE HAD A TOUGH TIME LIVING OUT HERE ALONE.

YOUR MOTHER DOES NOT BELIEVE THAT YOU HAVE ALREADY SPREAD YOUR NAME AND YOUR DEEDS ACROSS THE LAND, WITHIN ONLY 2-3 YEARS SINCE YOU LEFT THIS TOWN WITH YOUR UNTRAINED AND UNDEREQUIPPED VOLUNTEER ARMY.
JUST HOW LONG HAS IT BEEN SINCE YOU LEFT YOUR HOME?

XUANDE! SINCE WHEN HAVE YOU BECOME SUCH AN EFFEMINATE MAN!?


I HAVE FOUGHT VALIANTLY AND SUCCESSFULLY FOR MANY YEARS BUT THEY REFUSE TO RECOGNIZE MY DEEDS AND I BECAME WORRIED OVER HOW YOU MAY BY DOING ALL ALONE.

DID YOU NOT RISE UP TO SAVE AND RELIEVE THE SUFFERING OF ALL THE CITIZENS OF THIS LAND!?

ANY STRONG WARRIOR CAN WIN BATTLES. BUT YOU DID NOT LEAVE THIS VILLAGE WITH SUCH SMALL DREAMS AS BECOMING A MERE RULER OF SOME COUNTY OR COMMANDERY.

BUT UNLESS YOU OVERCOME ALL OF THAT, YOU WILL NEVER ACHIEVE ANYTHING WORTHY.

TO SET OUT WITH SUCH BIG DREAMS, IT SHOULD BE EXPECTED THAT THERE WILL BE SAD AND PAINFUL TIMES.

I BELIEVED THAT I WOULD NOT SEE YOU AGAIN FOR 10, NO... FOR 20 YEARS.

YOUR MOTHER ALREADY BELIEVES SHE GAVE HER SON AWAY FOR THE SAKE OF THIS NATION.

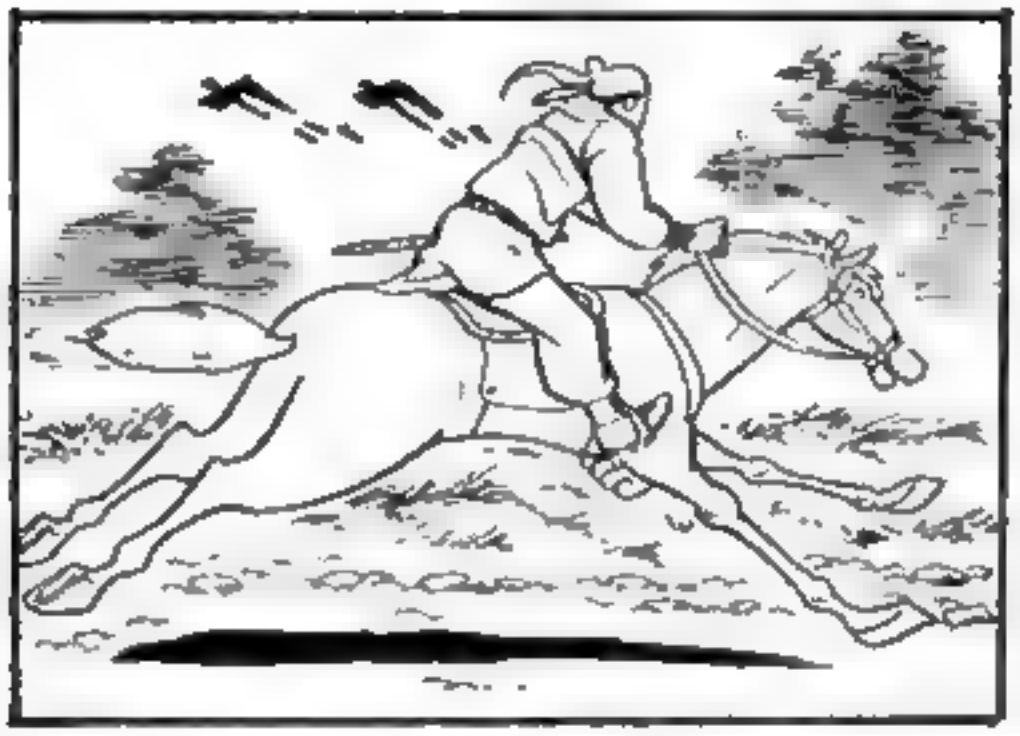
M-MOTHER, PLEASE WAIT!

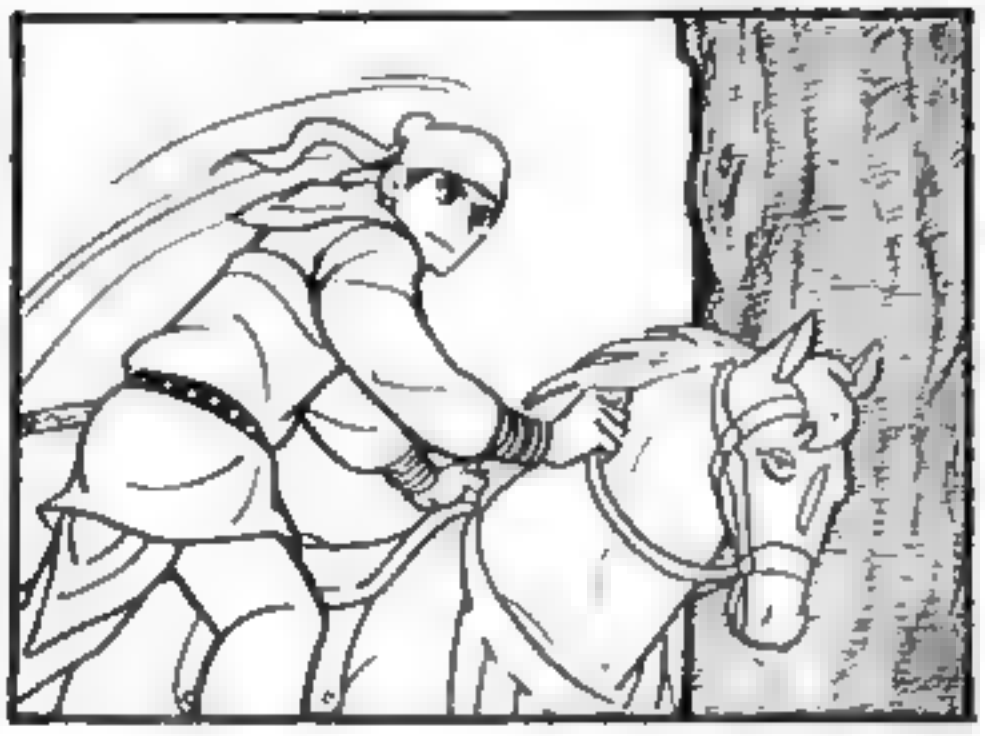
I WAS BEING SO FOOLISHLY THOUGHTLESS.

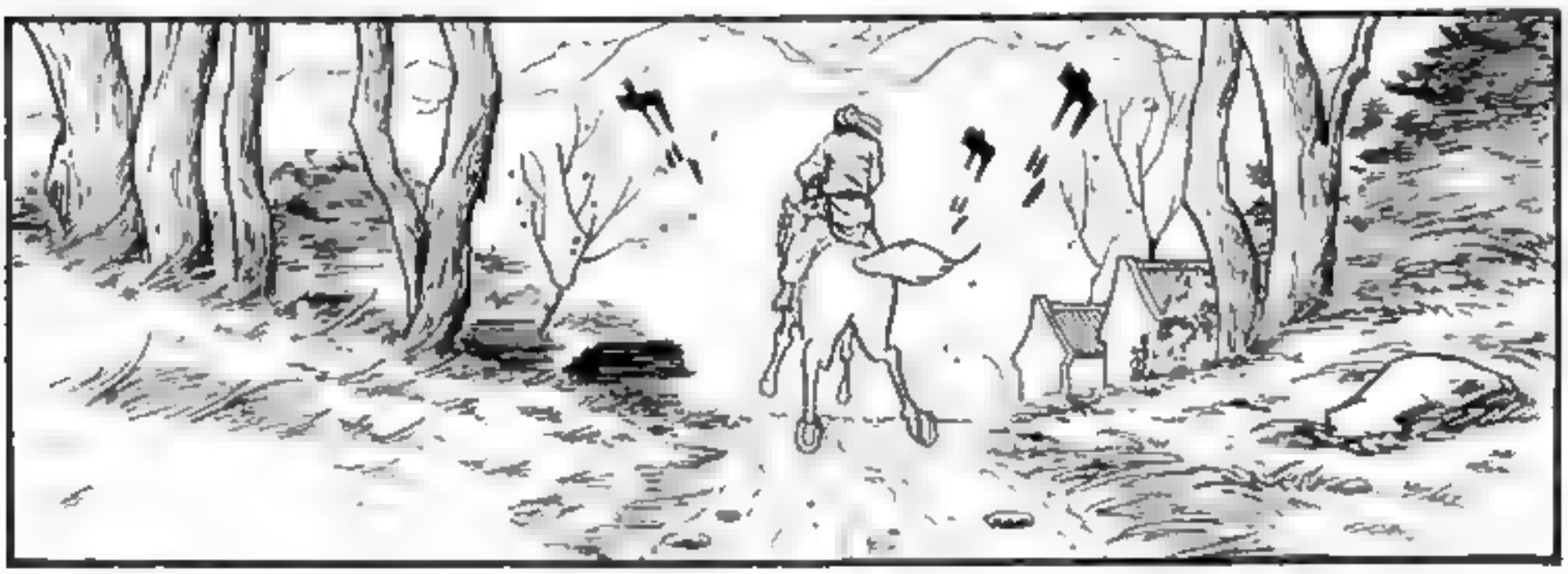
IF YOU ARE REALLY SO WORRIED OVER SUCH A TRIVIAL THING AS MY HEALTH, THEN I SHALL KILL MYSELF RIGHT HERE AND NOW.

MOTHER, MAY YOU REMAIN IN GOOD HEALTH.

IF YOU'VE REALIZED THAT, THEN LEAVE NOW.



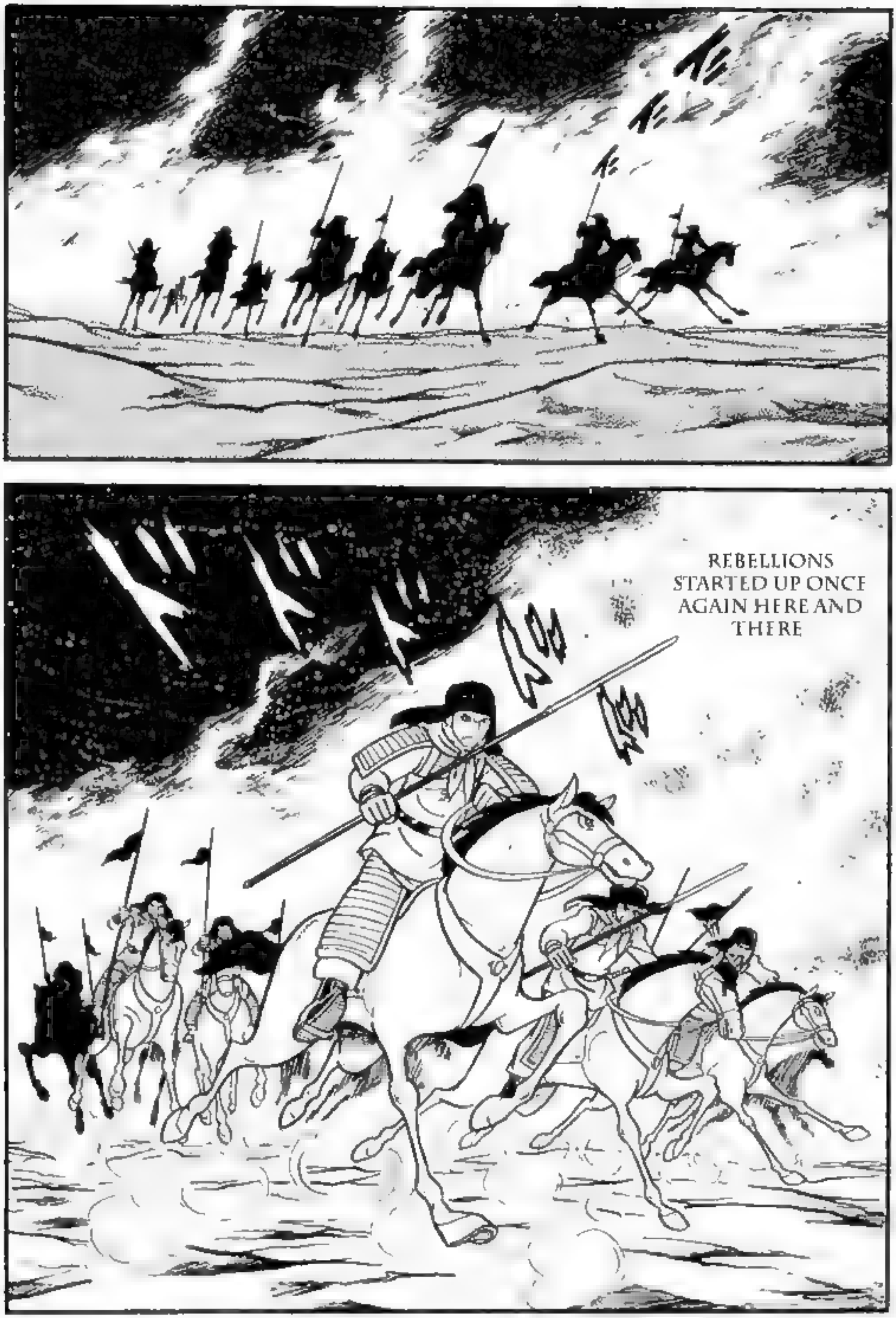


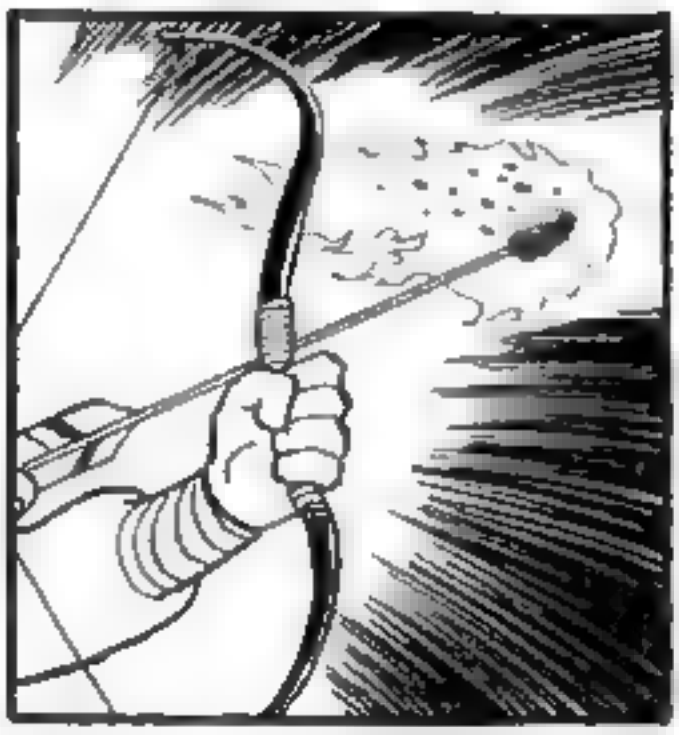


PLEASE DON'T THINK OF ME AS A COLD HEARTLESS MOTHER!

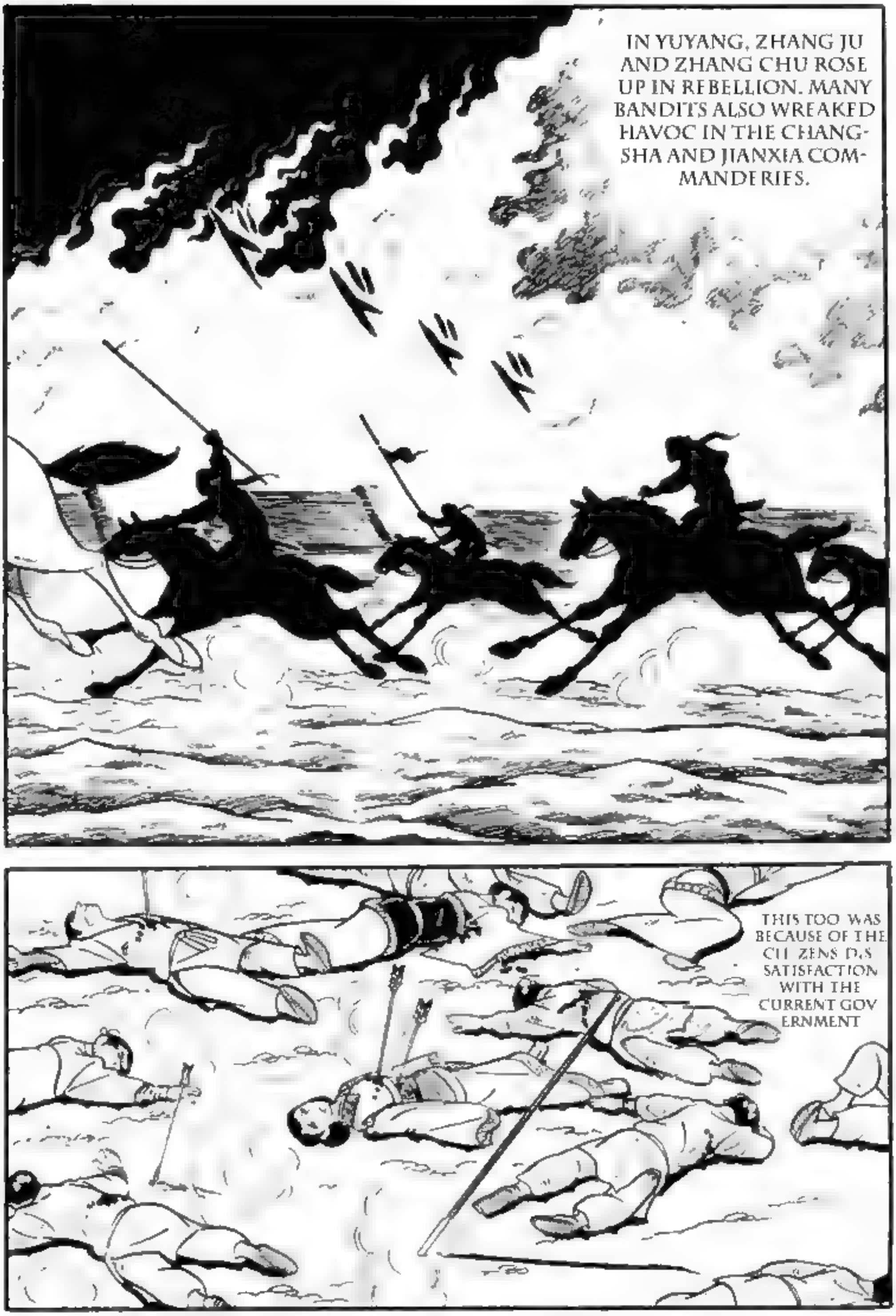
OH XUANDE!

OMEN OF CHAOS


REBELLIONS
STARTED UP ONCE
AGAIN HERE AND
THERE



REBELS!


IN YUYANG, ZHANG JU AND ZHANG CHU ROSE UP IN REBELLION. MANY BANDITS ALSO WREAKED HAVOC IN THE CHANG-SHA AND JIANXIA COM-MANDERIES.
THIS TOO WAS BECAUSE OF THE CITIZENS DIS SATISFACTION WITH THE CURRENT GOV ERNMENT

THE HEROES OF THAT REBELLION, HUANGFU SONG.

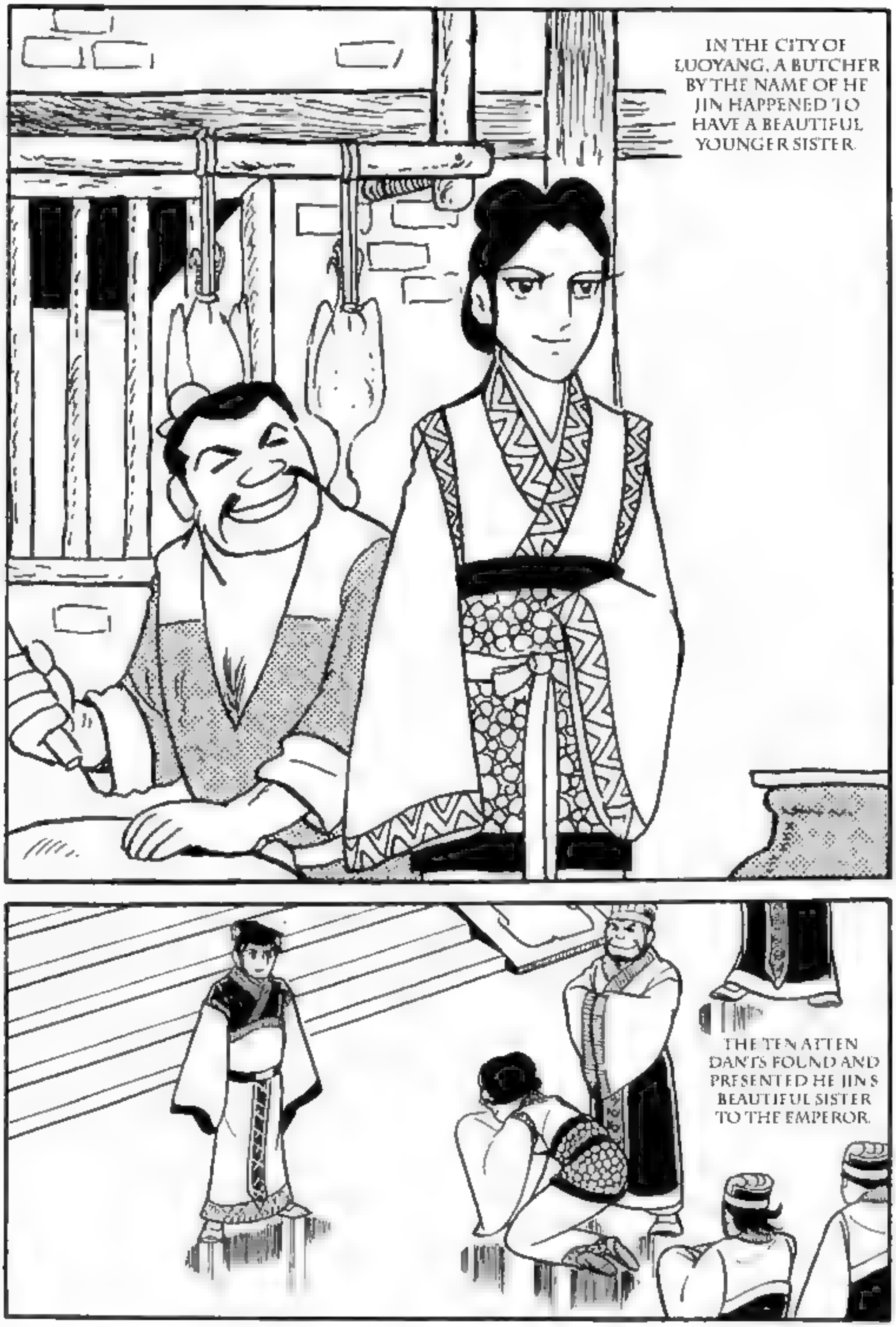
THE TEN ATTENDANT'S RULE BECAME EVEN MORE CORRUPT AND TERRIBLE AFTER THE YELLOW SCARF REBELLION

WITH EVEN THE GENERALS REDUCED TO SUCH A STATE, IT WAS NO WONDER THAT CRIME RAN RAMPANT AND THE PEOPLE'S DISSATISFACTION WAS AT AN ALL TIME HIGH

AND ZHU JUN BOTH DID NOT OFFER THE TEN ATTENDANTS ANY BRIBES AND WERE THUS REMOVED FROM THEIR POSTS

DESPITE ALL OF THIS, THE TEN ATTENDANTS CONTINUED TO MAKE FALSE RESPORTS TO THE EMPEROR, TELLING HIM THAT THE COUNTRY WAS AT PLACE AND THE CITIZENS HAPPIER THAN EVER

THEY SURROUNDED THE EMPEROR WITH ALCOHOL AND WOMEN, PREVENTING HIM FROM TAKING AN INTEREST IN THE OUTSIDE WORLD


IN THE CITY OF LUOYANG, A BUTCHER BY THE NAME OF HE JIN HAPPENED TO HAVE A BEAUTIFUL YOUNGER SISTER.
THE TEN ATTENDANTS FOUND AND PRESENTED HE JIN'S BEAUTIFUL SISTER TO THE EMPEROR.

BECAUSE OF THIS, HER BROTHER HE JIN WAS MADE A GENERAL, WATCHING OVER THE CAPITAL LUOYANG

THE EMPEROR QUICKLY FELL IN LOVE AND SPENT ALL OF HIS TIME WITH HER.

THAT WAS THE START OF YET ANOTHER TRAGEDY

SHE WAS SOON KNOWN AS EMPRESS HE AND SOON GAVE BIRTH TO PRINCE LIU BIAN

THE TEN ATTENDANTS SOON PRESENTED THE EMPEROR WITH ANOTHER CONCUBINE BY THE NAME OF CONSORT WANG. SHE TOO, GAVE BIRTH TO A BABY BOY NAMED LIU XIE

AND PRINCE LIU XI WAS GIVEN TO THE EMPRESS DOWAGER DONG TO RAISE

EMPRESS HE, LEARNING OF THIS FACT, ASSASSINATED CONSORT WANG BY POISONING

SEEING AS HOW THE PALACE WAS MIRED IN VIOLENCE AND CORRUPTION, IT WAS NO WONDER THE OUTSIDE WAS PLUNGED IN CHAOS AS WELL.

THE MAJESTY'S HEALTH HAS BEEN WEAKENED BY FREQUENT DRINKING.

HMM...

HOW IS THE MAJESTY'S CONDITION, DOCTOR?

YOUR MAJESTY, IT IS JIAN SHUO OF THE TEN ATTENDANTS.

HMM, WELL I WILL GO INSIDE AND SEE HOW HIS MAJESTY IS FARING.

IT MIGHT BE ALL OVER FOR MYSELF.

NOT VERY WELL.

HOW IS YOUR MAJESTY FEELING?

THERE IS SOMETHING THAT STILL WORRIES ME.

NO, I KNOW ABOUT MY BODY BEST.

HOW COULD SIRE SAY SUCH WEAK WORDS...

WHAT IS IT, YOUR MAJESTY?

THOUGH HE IS ALSO MY CHILD LIKE PRINCE LIU BIAN, I FEEL THAT HE IS UNFAIRLY BEING FORCED TO LIVE A LONELY LIFE.

IT IS ABOUT PRINCE LIU XIE WHOM I ENTRUSTED TO MY MOTHER TO RAISE.

WHAT!

THEN HE JIN MUST BE ELIMINATED.

IF IT IS YOUR MAJESTY'S WISH TO MAKE PRINCE LIU XIE YOUR SUCCESSOR...

I BELIEVE IT WILL BE IMPOSSIBLE TO HAVE PRINCE LIU XIE SUCEED THE THRONE SAFELY WITHOUT KILLING HE JIN.

HE WOULD MOST DEFINITELY DESIRE FOR PRINCE LIU BIAN, HIS NEPHEW TO BE MADE THE NEXT EMPEROR.

HE JIN IS NOW GENERAL SOLELY BECAUSE OF HIS YOUNGER SISTER.

MMM...

THEN I SHALL DO SOMETHING ABOUT IT AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

THE MATTER MUST BE SETTLED BEFORE THEN.

I DO NOT THINK I WILL LIVE MUCH LONGER.

JUST LEAVE IT TO ME, SIRE.

BUT CAN YOU REALLY DO IT?

RESIDENCE OF GENERAL HE JIN

WHAT IS IT?

GENERAL HE JIN!

BUT I VISITED HIM JUST YESTERDAY! HAS THE EMPEROR'S CONDITION SUDDENLY CHANGED FOR THE WORSE?

IN ANY CASE, I SHALL BE OFF THEN.

WHAT!

THERE HAS BEEN AN ORDER FROM THE EMPEROR FOR YOU TO COME IMMEDIATELY.

WHAT IS IT, YUAN SHAO?

WAIT GENERAL.

HMM.

THEY HAVE NO QUALMS ABOUT ASSASSINATION I WOULD ADVISE TO TAKE CAUTION SIR.

EVER SINCE THE EMPEROR HAS BEEN FEELING UNWELL, THE ACTIONS OF THE TEN ATTENDANTS HAVE BEEN SUSPICIOUS.

YES, SIR.

FINE, I SHALL SEND OUT A SPY FIRST.

HMPH, WHAT'S TAKING HIM SO LONG!?

HE SHOULD BE BACK ANY MOMENT NOW.

HAS THE SPY STILL NOT RETURNED!?

GEN-ERAL.

OH, YOU'VE FINALLY RETU-RNED!

I-IT SEEMS THAT TEN ATTENDANTS ARE PLOTTING TO ASSAINATE YOU SIR.

SO, WHAT IS THE REASON FOR THE EMPEROR'S SUDDEN CALL?

THOSE DAMNED TEN ATTEN-DANTS!

JUST AS I THOUGHT ...

WHAT!?

BRING ALL MY MINISTERS AND CAPTAINS RIGHT AWAY!

YES SIR.

GENTLEMAN, I HAVE CALLED YOU SO SUDDENLY FOR A MOST URGENT MATTER.

THE TEN ATTENDANTS ARE PLOTTING TO TAKE MY HEAD!

THE WORLD IS IN RUINS RIGHT NOW THANKS TO THE GREED AND CORRUPTION OF THE TEN ATTENDANTS.

I BELIEVE THAT IT WOULD JUST BE BEST TO ELIMINATE THOSE SCUM NOW THAT IT HAS COME TO THIS!

HOWEVER, THE TEN ATTENDANTS HOLD AN IMMEASURABLE AMOUNT OF POWER WITHIN THE PALACE. ACTING HASTILY COULD LEAD TO YOUR DEMISE.

GENERAL, I AM OF THE SAME OPINION.

I FIRMLY BELIEVE THAT KILLING THEM WOULD BE FOR THE GOOD OF THIS NATION. WHAT DO YOU GENTLEMEN THINK?

SILENCE, CAO CAO!

.....!

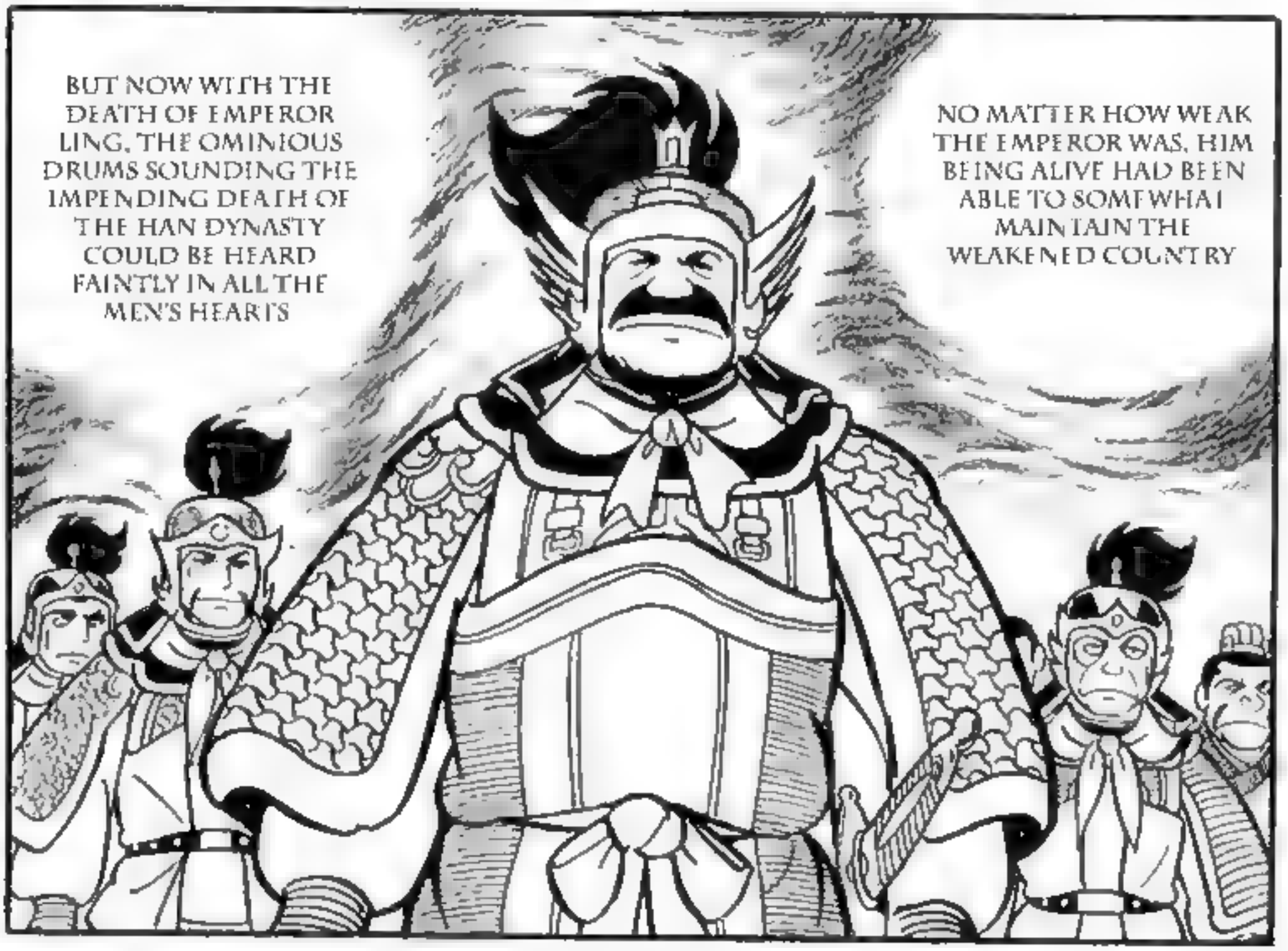
WHAT WOULD A GREENHORN LIKE YOU KNOW ABOUT THE INNER WORKINGS OF THE PALACE!

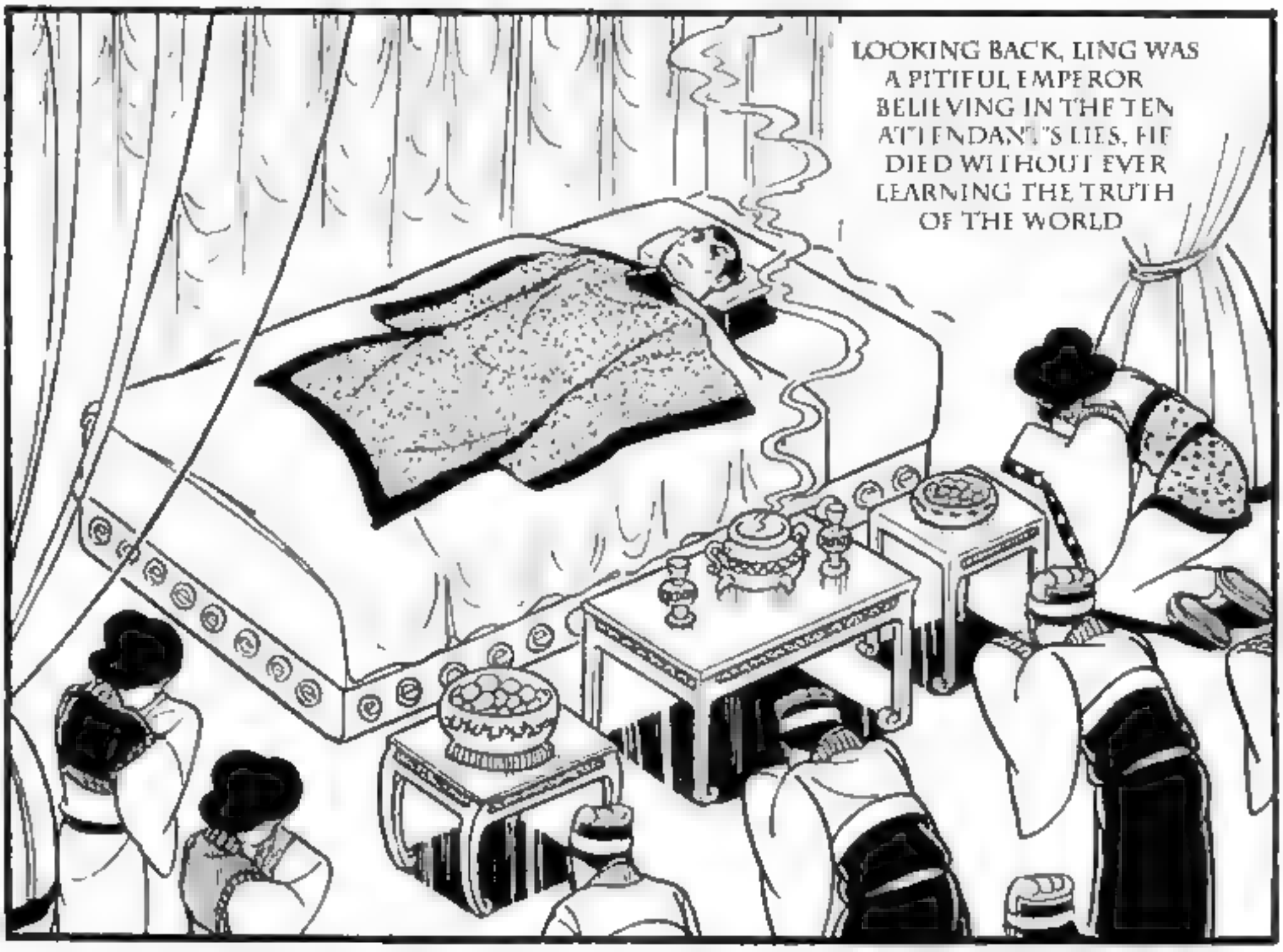
GENERAL!

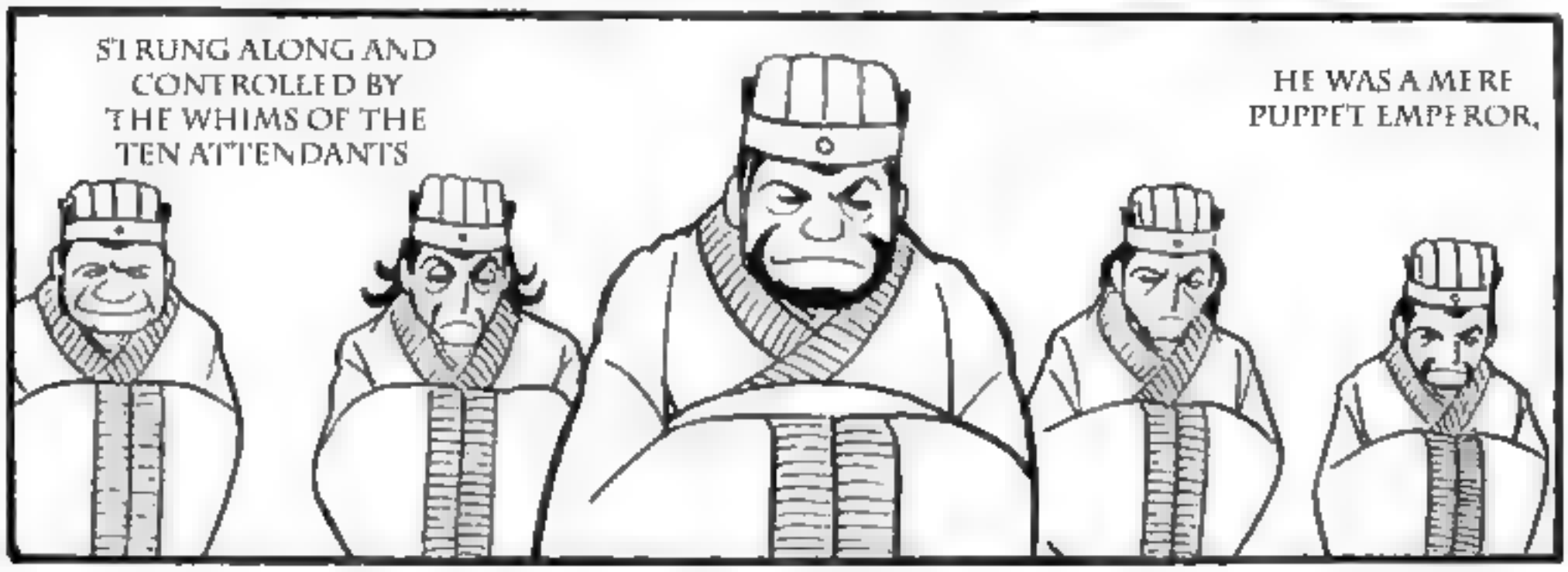
HIS MAJESTY HAS..!?

PASSED AWAY!?

WHAT!?
THE EMPEROR HAS JUST PASSED AWAY.


BUT NOW WITH THE DEATH OF EMPEROR LING, THE OMINIOUS DRUMS SOUNDING THE IMPENDING DEATH OF THE HAN DYNASTY COULD BE HEARD FAINTLY IN ALL THE MEN'S HEARTS
NO MATTER HOW WEAK THE EMPEROR WAS, HIM BEING ALIVE HAD BEEN ABLE TO SOMEWHAT MAINTAIN THE WEAKENED COUNTRY


LOOKING BACK, LING WAS A PITIFUL EMPEROR BELIEVING IN THE TEN ATTENDANT'S LIES, HE DIED WITHOUT EVER LEARNING THE TRUTH OF THE WORLD


STRUNG ALONG AND CONTROLLED BY THE WHIMS OF THE TEN ATTENDANTS
HE WAS A MERE PUPPET EMPEROR,

JUST ANOTHER TOOL, WAITING TO BE USED

YES SIR.

HAVE YOU SOME OTHER NEWS!?

GEN-ERAL!

AND THEN MAKE PRINCE LIU XIE SUCCEED THE THRONE.

IT SEEMS THAT THE TEN ATTEN-DANTS WERE PLANNING ON HIDING THE EMPEROR'S DEATH AND CALLING YOU OUT TO THE PALACE TO ASSASSINATE YOU,

UNFORGIV-ABLE...!

W-WHAT!?

YES, GENE-RAL.

WE SHALL ATTACK THE PALACE AND KILL ALL OF THE TEN ATTENDANTS THIS INSTANT!

THERE YOU HAVE IT GENTLEMEN! MY PATIENCE HAS NOW BEEN BROKEN!

I WAS WAITING FOR YOU.

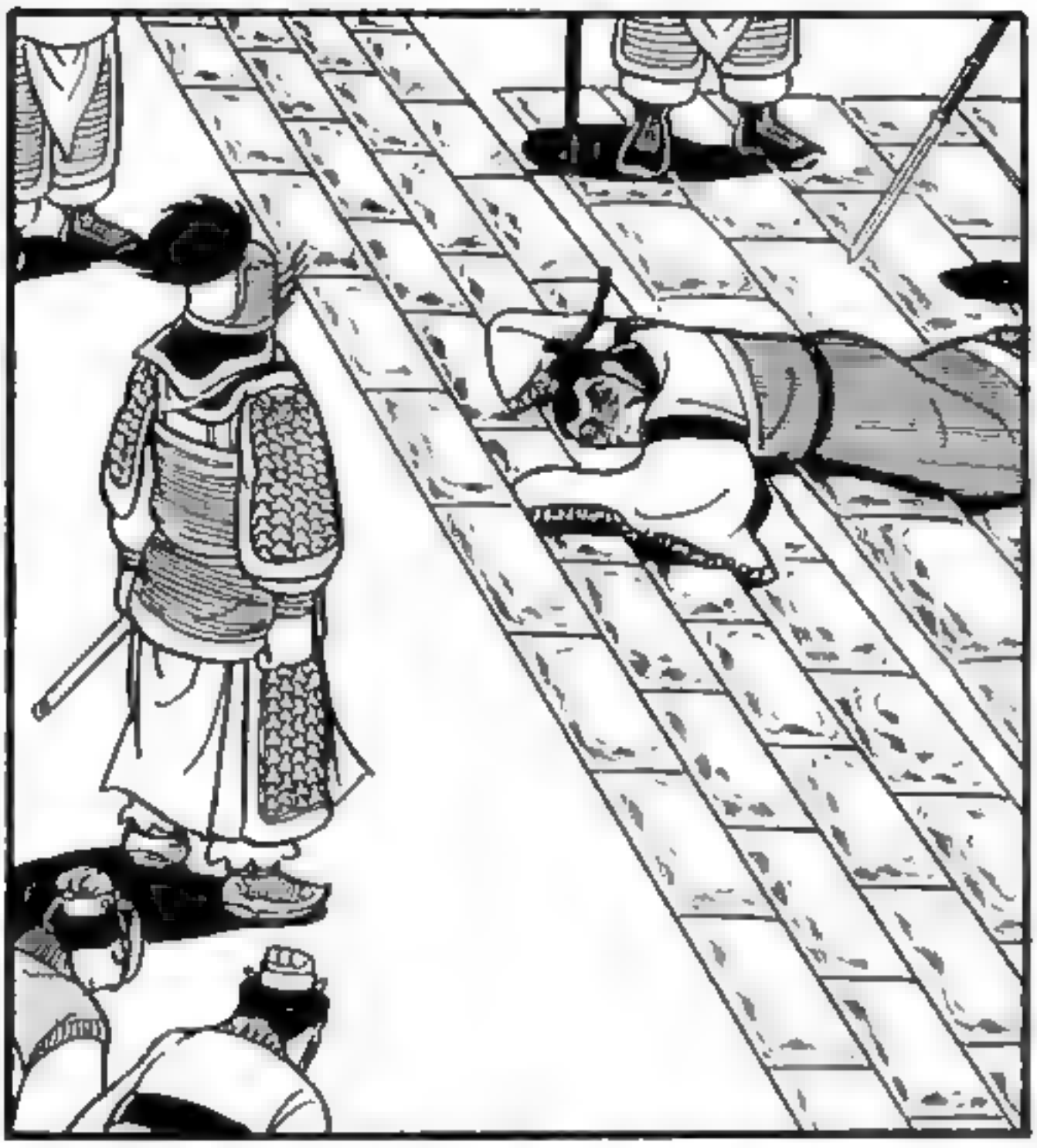
?
?

GENERAL HE JIN, I AM A MESS-ENGER FROM THE PALACE.

W-WHAT-EVER DO YOU MEAN, GENERAL!?

LET US START BY KILLING HIM!

NOW, OFF TO THE PALACE WE GO!

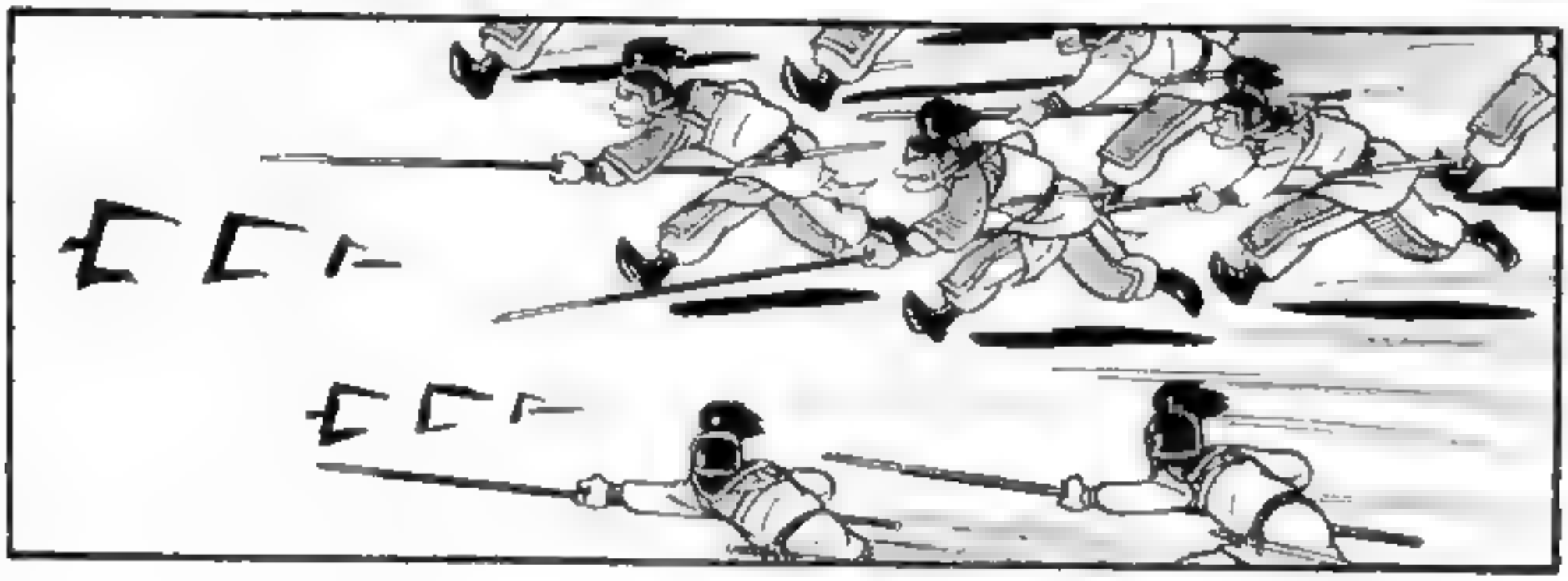


WHAT!
SIR JIAN SHUO! GENERAL HE JIN AND HIS SOLDIERS ARE HEADED FOR THIS PALACE!

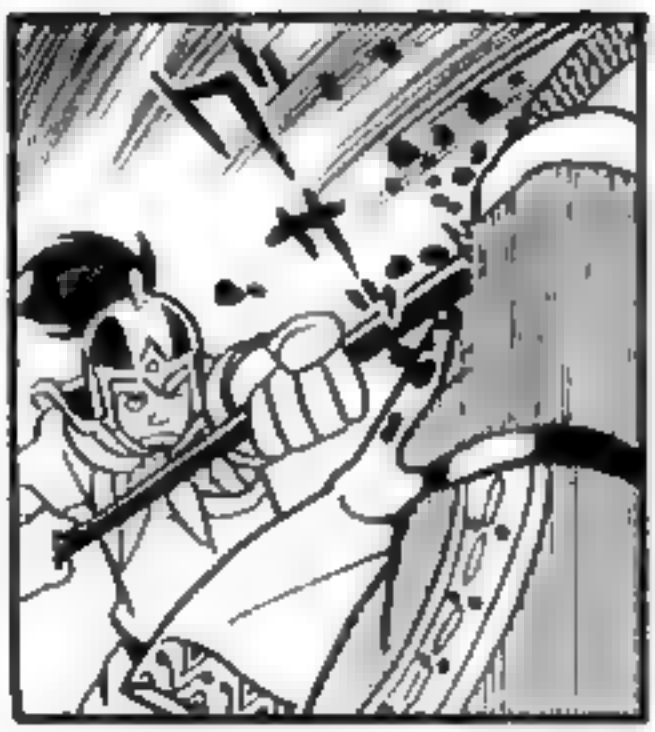
WHAT IS THIS RUCKUS!

AHH!

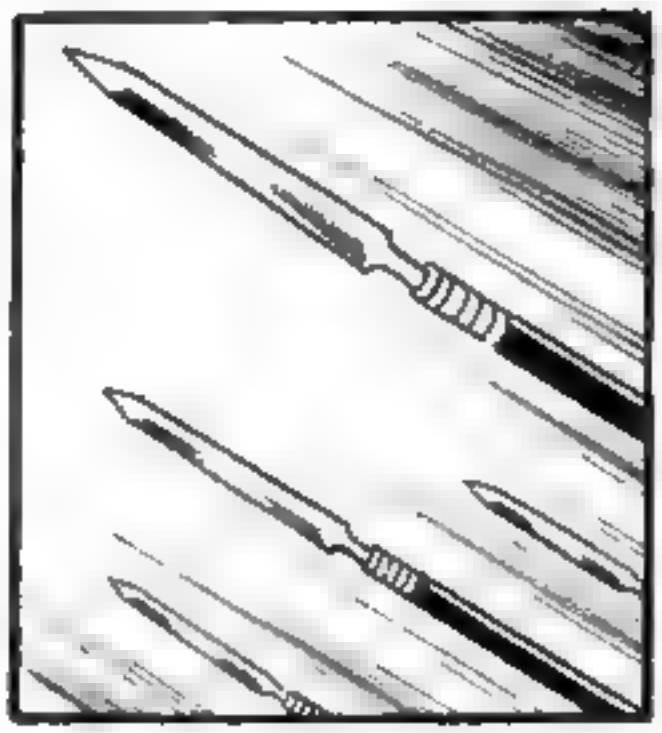
HE FOUND OUT ABOUT OUR PLAN!?



AGHHH!



HE'S OVER HERE!



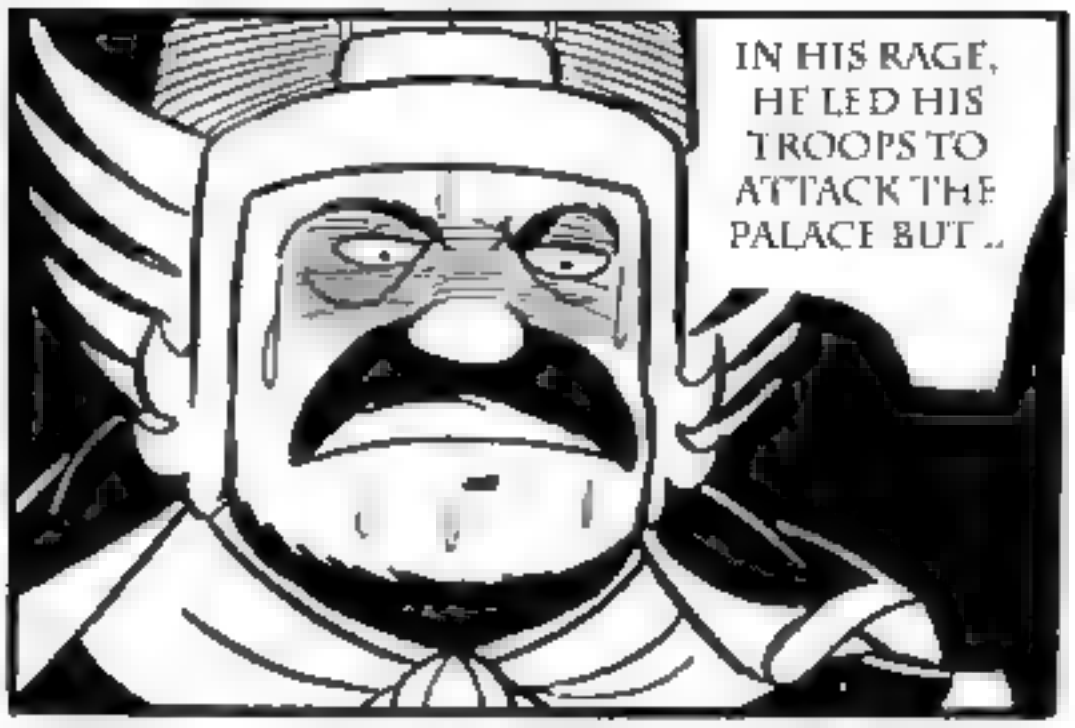
THEY'RE NOWHERE TO BE FOUND SIR.

WHERE ARE THE REST OF THE TEN ATTENDANTS!?

GENERAL, WE'VE KILLED HIM!

SEARCH MORE THOROUGHLY! AND WHEN YOU FIND THEM, KILL THEM IMMEDI-ATELY!

LOOKING AT THIS SCENE OF SLAUGH TER IN THE PALACE, GENERAL HE JIN S FACE TURNED PALE


IN HIS RAGE, HE LED HIS TROOPS TO ATTACK THE PALACE BUT ..

HE JIN WAS ORIGINALLY A MERE COMMONER, POSSESSING NO NOTABLE TALENTS

SEEING AS HOW ONE WORD FROM HIM HAD TRANSFORMED THE PALACE INTO A BLOOD-BATH, GENERAL HE JIN WAS LEFT FEELING TERRIFIED.

EMPRESS HE,

PLEASE CALM DOWN YOUR BROTHER.

MEANWHILE THE REMAINING TEN ATTENDANTS TOOK REFUGE INSIDE EMPRESS HE'S ROOM

TRUE. IT WAS YOU PEOPLE WHO RESCUED ME FROM THE LIFE OF POVERTY.

IT WAS THANKS TO US THAT EMPRESS HE IS IN THE POSITION SHE IS TODAY. YET BECAUSE GENERAL HE JIN HATES US...

I UNDERSTAND. I SHALL TRY TO CALM MY BROTHER DOWN.

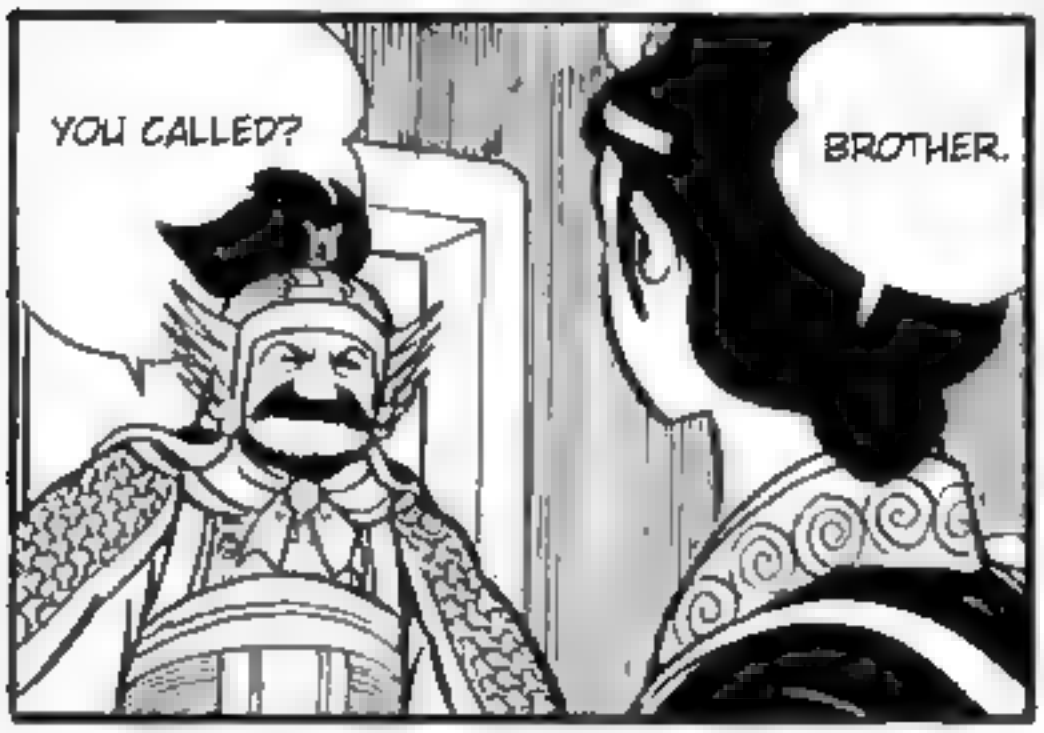
WHAT IS IT?

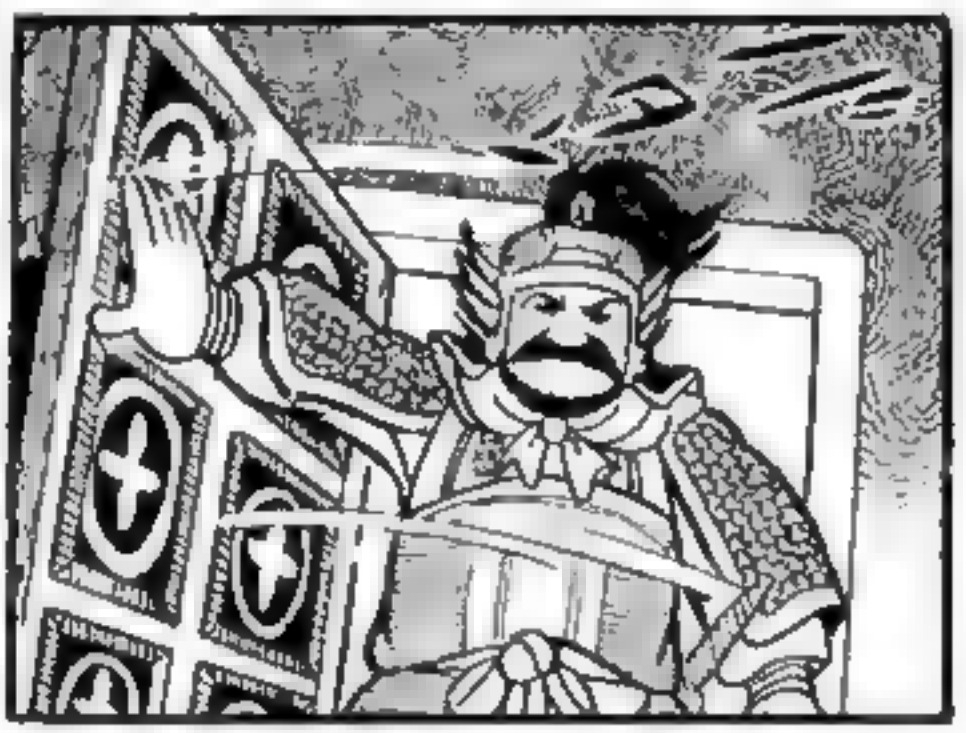
EMPRESS HE IS CALLING FOR YOU, GENERAL.

GENERAL HE JIN!

WHAT DOES MY SISTER WANT NOW OUT OF ALL THE TIMES!?

!


YOU CALLED?
BROTHER.



IT IS BECAUSE OF THEM, WE ARE WHERE WE ARE TODAY.

T-THAT IS TRUE BUT...

WHAT!

BROTHER, PLEASE SPARE THE LIVES OF THE REMAINING TEN ATTENDANTS.

I... I GUESS NOT...

PLEASE BROTHER, IS THERE A NEED FOR FURTHER BLOODSHED?

THE ONE WHO PLANNED TO ASSASSINATE YOU WAS ONLY JIAN SHUO AND HE IS ALREADY DEAD.

ALRIGHT THEN.

THEN PLEASE FORGIVE THEM.

ALRIGHT, LET US WITHDRAW MEN!

WHAT?
?

THERE IS NO NEED TO KILL THE REST.
THE ONE WHO PLOTTED MY DEATH WAS JIAN SHUO AND HE HAS ALREADY BEEN EXECUTED.

?
?

G-GENERAL, HAVE YOU GONE MAD!? IF WE DO NOT WEED OUT ALL OF THE TEN ATTENDANT'S INFLUENCE, YOU WILL SURELY REGRET IT IN THE NEAR FUTURE!

SILENCE! THERE IS NO ONE THAT DARES TO RAISE HIS SWORD AGAINST ME NOW.

IT IS BETTER TO WRAP THIS UP QUICKLY.

IF THIS RUCKUS IN THE PALACE IS HEARD BY THE CITIZENS OUTSIDE, THEN THE REST OF THIS NATION MIGHT BE PUT FURTHER IN CHAOS.

BUT GEN-ERAL!

.....

SHUT UP!!

NOW WE CAN FINALLY HAVE PRINCE LIU BIAN SUCCEED THE THRONE.

WELL DONE, MY DEAR BROTHER.

IT IS EMPRESS DOWAGER DONG.

WHAT?

BUT THERE IS STILL ONE OBSTACLE IN THE WAY.

FINE, I SHALL DO SOMETHING ABOUT IT THEN.

HMM...

BECAUSE SHE LOVES PRINCE LIU XIE SO DEARLY, SHE MIGHT BECOME A NUISANCE IN THE NEAR FUTURE.

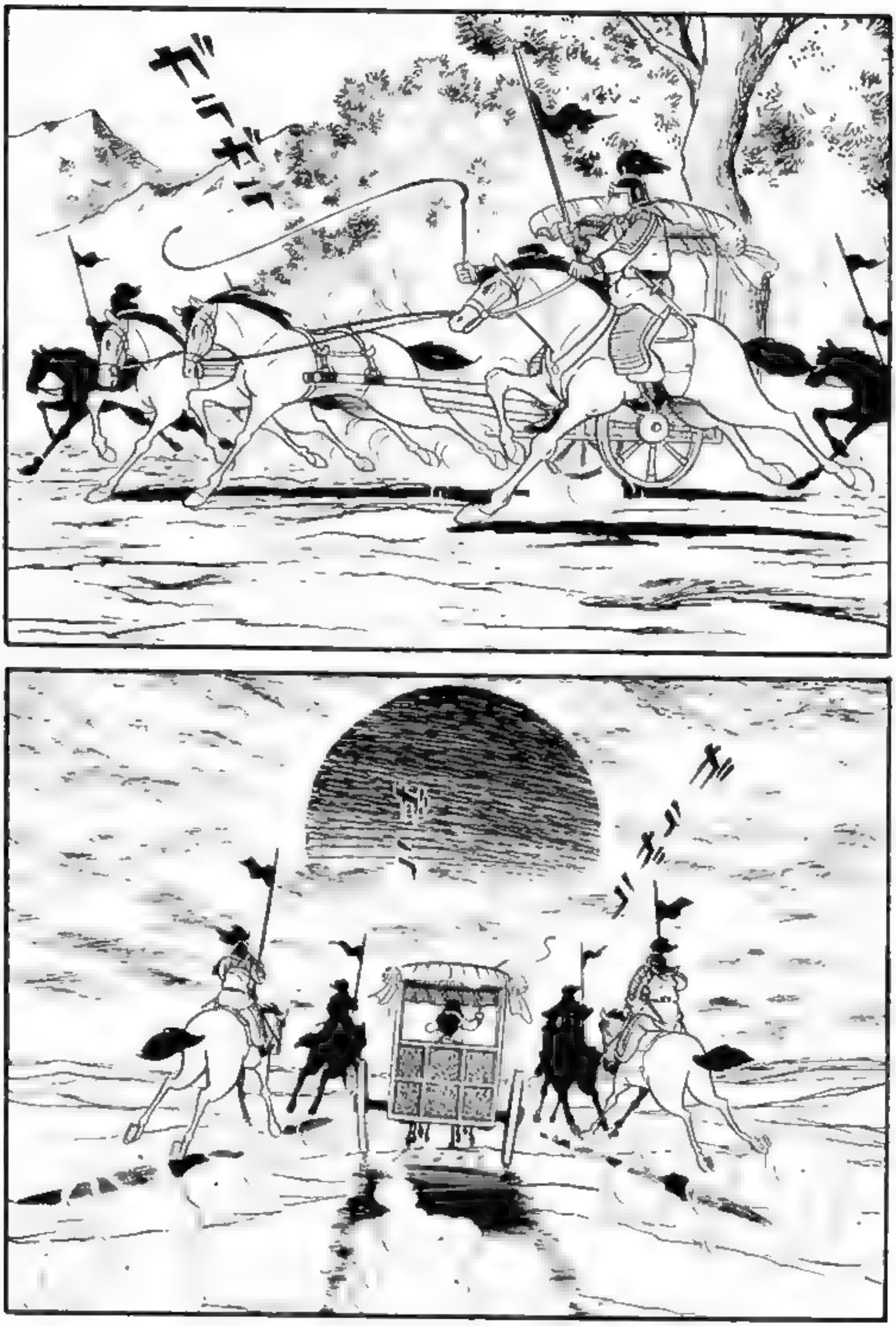
YOU ARE TELLING ME TO LEAVE THIS PLACE...?

OH DEAR, I MUST HAVE ADORED PRINCE LIU BIAN TOO MUCH.

YES MILADY. THAT IS THE ORDER.

ALRIGHT.

AND THUS I GAINED THE DISFA-VOUR OF EMPRESS HE.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WHAT?

EMPRESS DOWAGER DONG, IT IS TIME YOU STEP OUT FROM THE CHARIOT.

I-IT COULDN'T BE...!

I AM THE MOTHER OF THE EMPEROR OF HAN!

WHAT ARE YOU PLANNING TO DO OUT HERE?

THESE ARE MY ORDERS AS WELL.

IT APPEARS THAT THE HAN DYNASTY HAS FINALLY COME TO AN END...

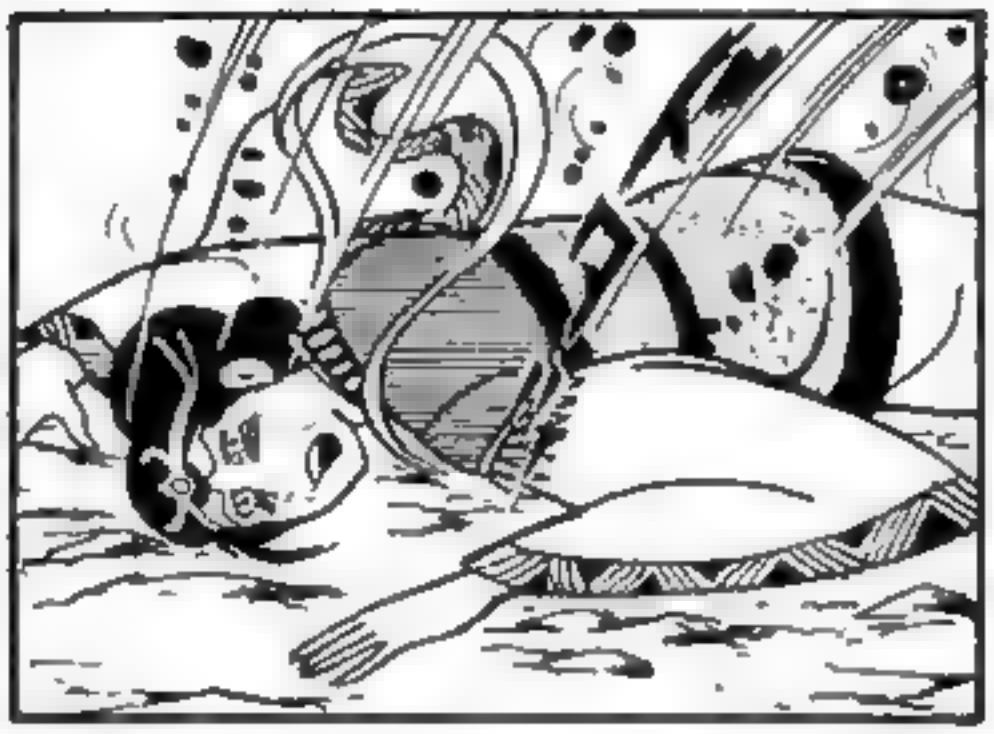
HOW COULD THIS BE...

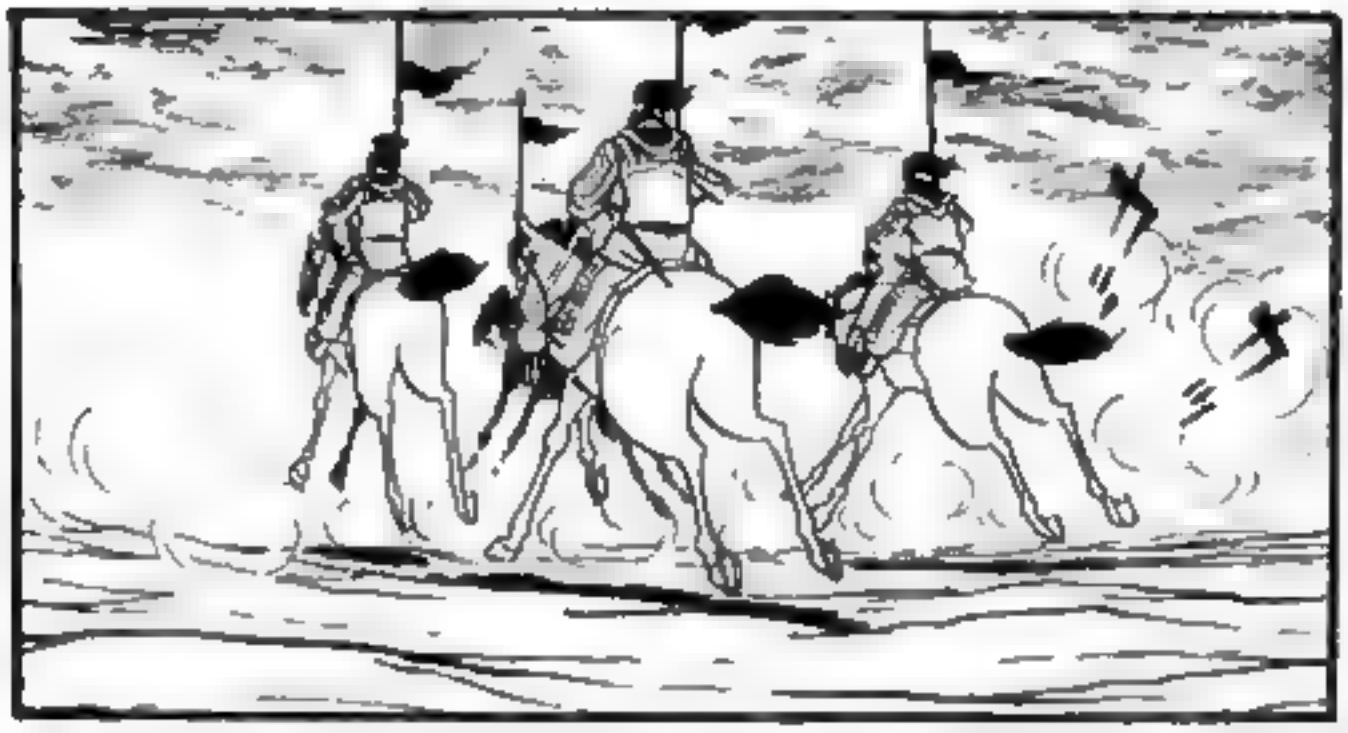
THESE ARE MY ORDERS.

PLEASE STEP DOWN, MILADY OR I SHALL BE FORCED TO DRAG YOU OUT MYSELF.

FORGIVE ME!

FINE. DO AS YOU WISH.

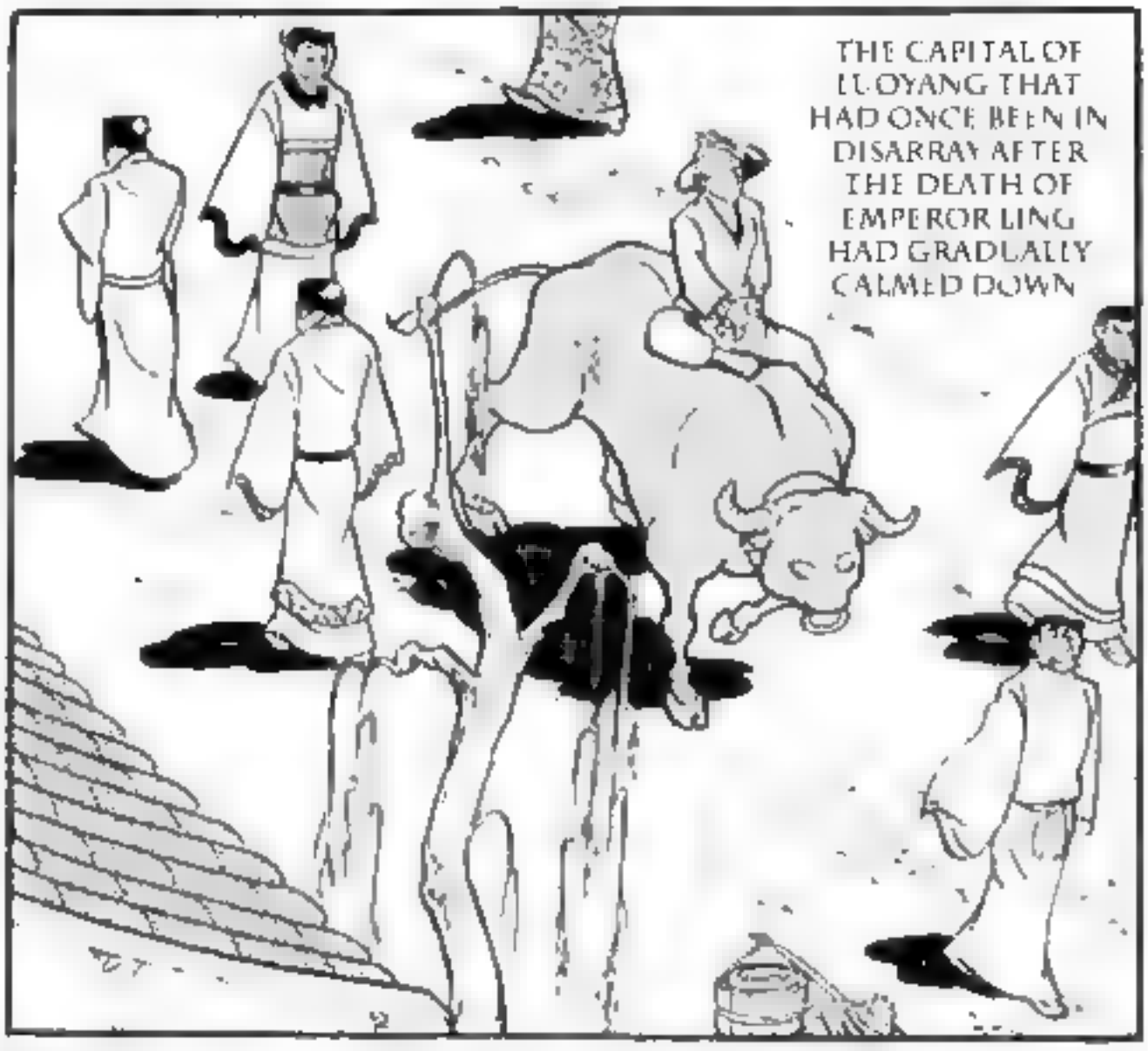


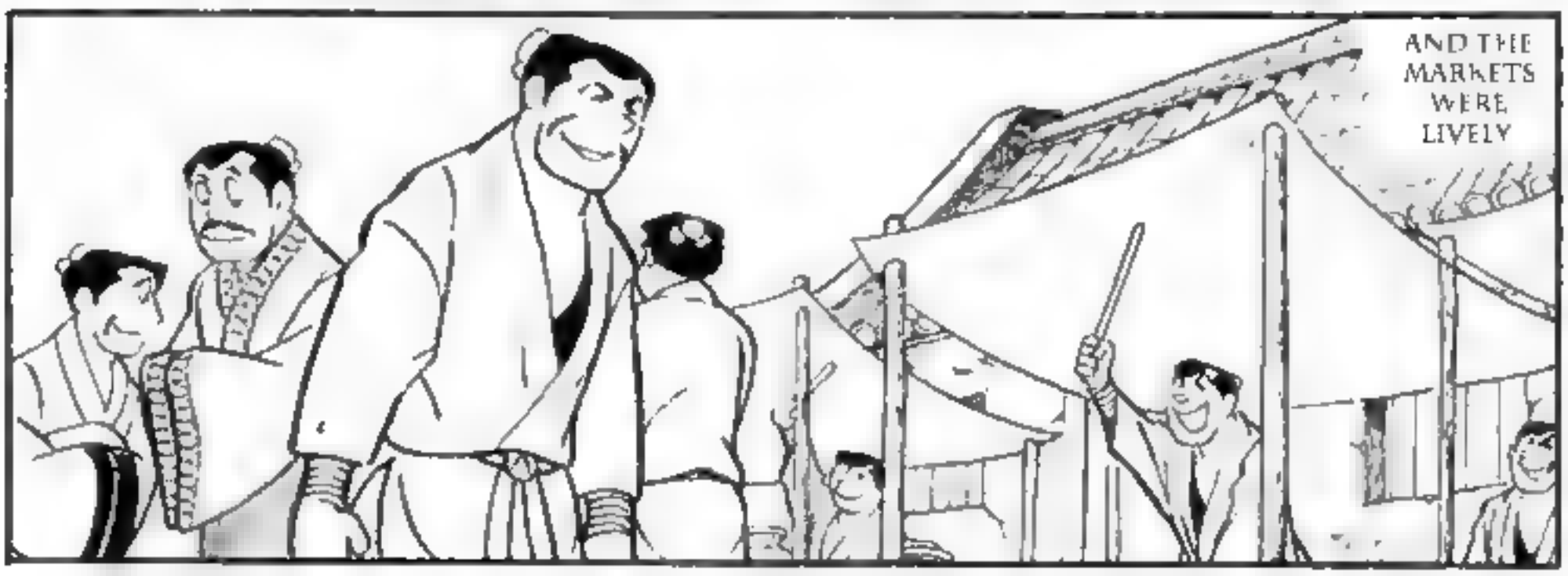


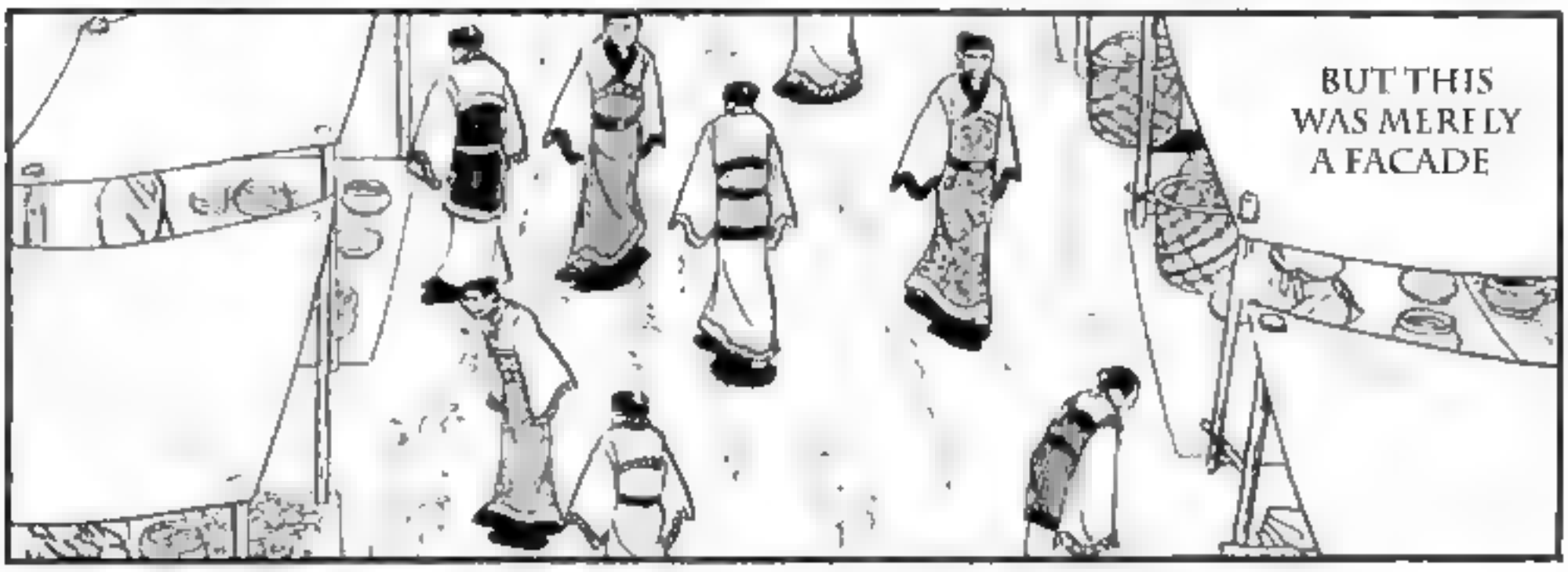
LET US RETURN!

THE NIGHT FALLING ACROSS THE SKY WAS LIKE THE FINAL CURTAINS CLOSING DOWN ON 400 YEARS OF HAN DYNASTY

DEATH OF GENERAL HE JIN







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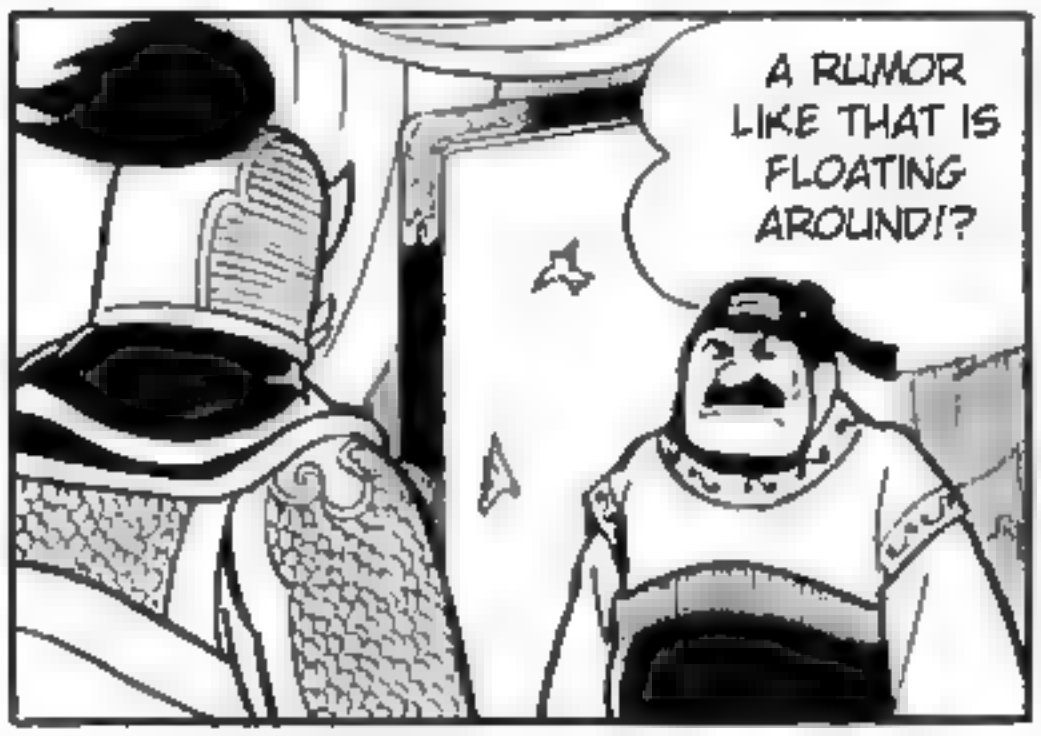
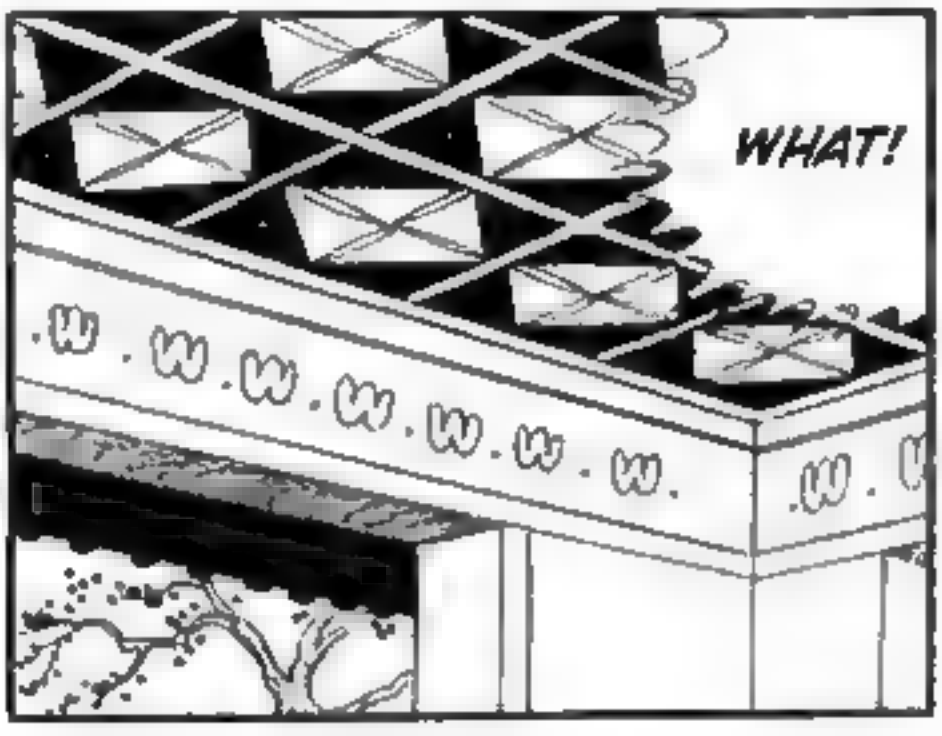
A RUMOR BEGAN TO SPREAD AMONG THE CITIZENS THAT GENERAL HE JIN HAD ASSASSINATED EMPRESS DOWAGER DONG


A RUMOR LIKE THAT IS FLOATING AROUND!?


WHAT!

NNGGH...! THOSE DAMNED TEN ATTENDANTS, HAVE THEY ALREADY FORGOTTEN THE FACT THAT I SPARED THEIR LIVES!?

AFTER LOOKING INTO THE MATTER, IT SEEMS THAT IT WAS THE TEN ATTENDANTS WHO SPREAD THAT RUMOR.

MMM...

GENERAL, AT THIS RATE, WHO KNOWS WHAT THE TEN ATTENDANTS MIGHT DO AGAIN!

YES, SIR.

ALRIGHT, GATHER THE TROOPS!

LET HIM IN.
OUR SPY FROM GENERAL HE JIN'S RESIDENCES HAS RETURNED.

THIS IS VERY BAD...

WE MUST SPEAK WITH EMPRESS HE RIGHT AWAY.

WHAT!?

IT SEEMS THAT GENERAL HE JIN IS GATHERING HIS TROOPS TO TRY TO ELIMINATE THE TEN ATTENDANTS YET AGAIN.

YOUR ELDER BROTHER, GENERAL HE JIN, IS GATHERING SOLDIERS TO KILL US ONCE AGAIN.

EMPRESS HE, ANOTHER CATASTROPHE IS ABOUT TO OCCUR.

WHY ARE THE TEN ATTENDANTS IN SUCH A PANIC TODAY?

YET HE IS COMING TO MURDER US AGAIN.

YES, MADAME. WE HAVE NOT DONE ANYTHING TO EARN THE GENERAL'S FURY.

WHAT!?

GUARD!

UNDERSTOOD. I SHA... ONCE AGAIN SPEAK TO MY BROTHER THEN.

YES, MAD-AME?

AS YOU WISH, MADAME.

TELL MY BROTHER TO COME TO THE PALACE AT ONCE.

?

FROM MY SISTER?

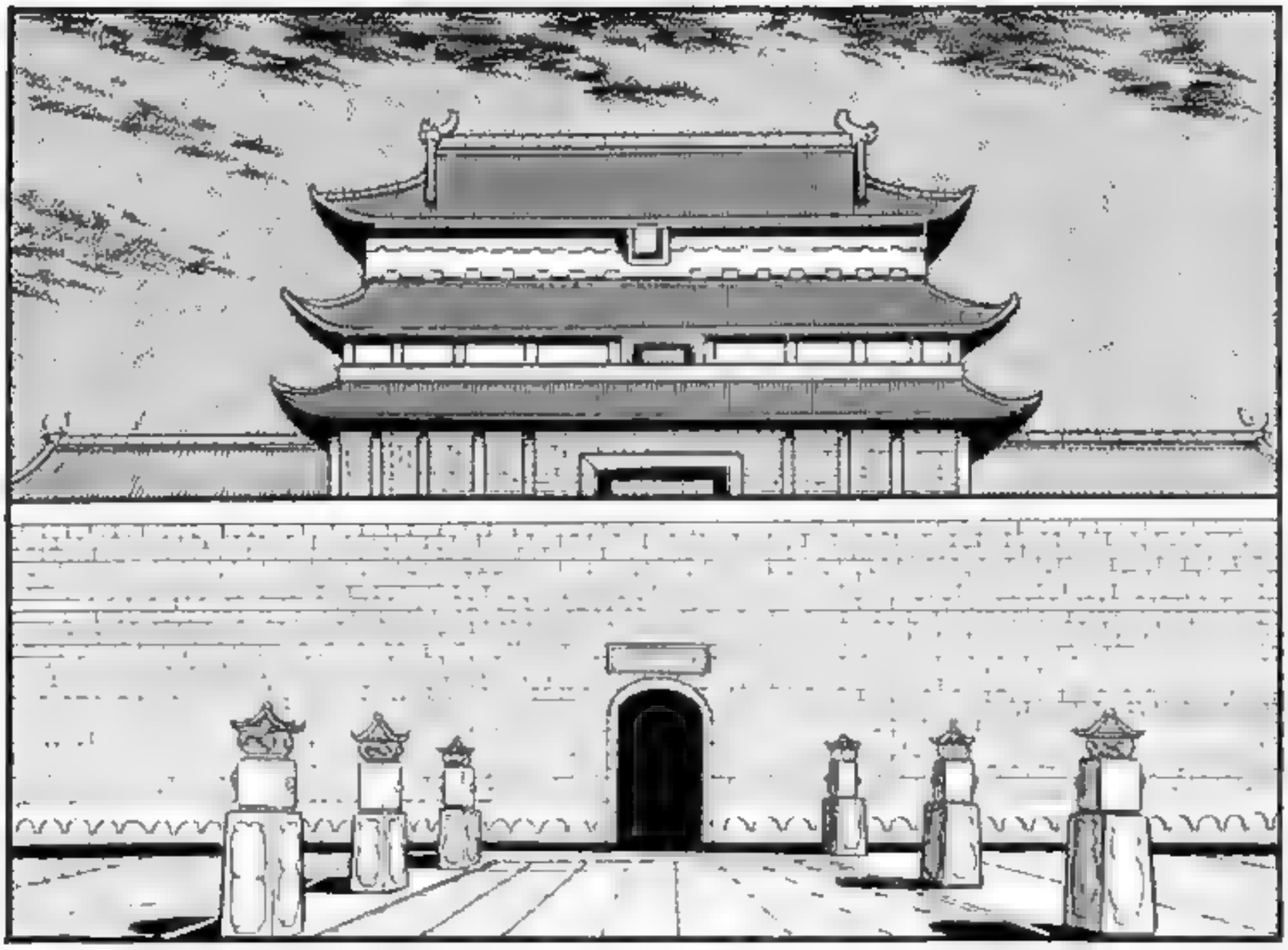
I AM A MESSENGER SENT BY EMPRESS HE TO GIVE A MESSAGE TO THE GENERAL.

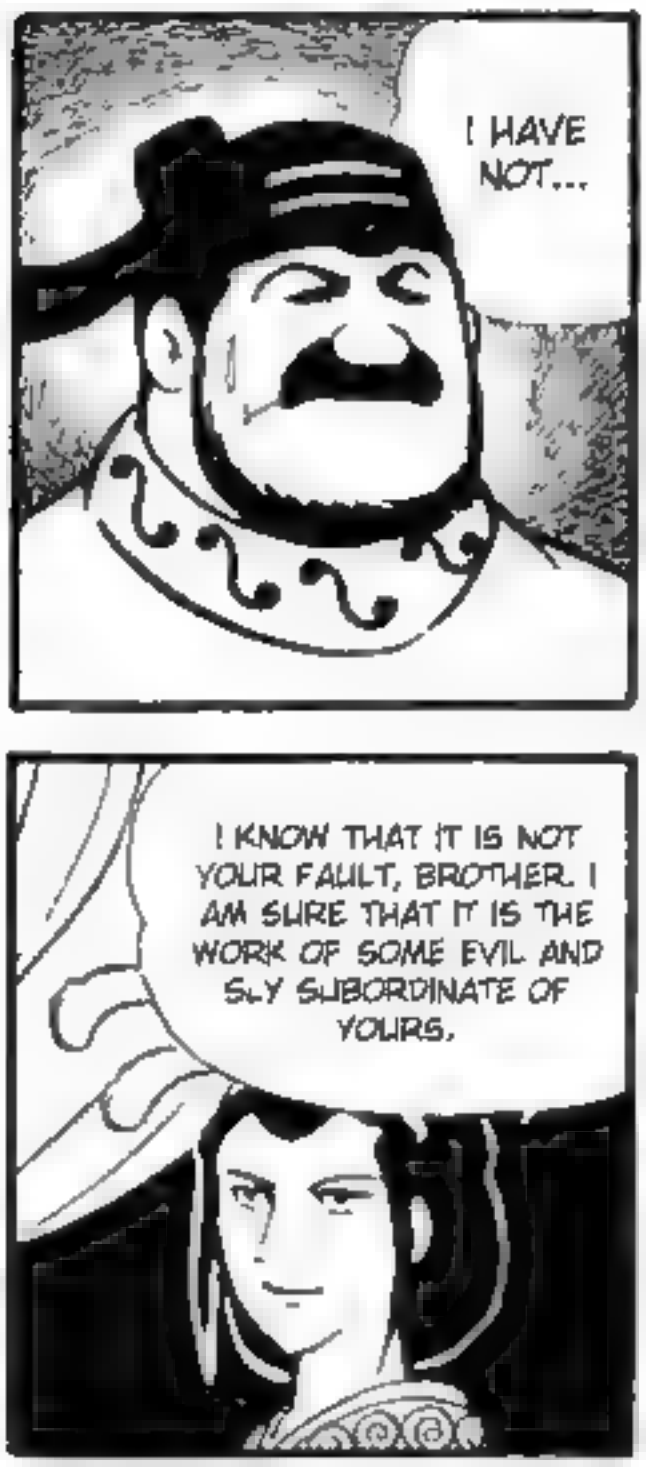
WHAT DOES MY SISTER WISH TO SAY TO ME?

SHE WISHES FOR THE GENERAL TO COME TO THE PALACE RIGHT AWAY.

WELL ALRIGHT, THEN.

NOW?




I HAVE NOT...

BROTHER, I HAD HEARD THAT YOU HAVE BEEN LED ON FALSELY INTO TRYING TO KILL THE TEN ATTENDANTS YET AGAIN.

I KNOW THAT IT IS NOT YOUR FAULT, BROTHER. I AM SURE THAT IT IS THE WORK OF SOME EVIL AND SLY SUBORDINATE OF YOURS.

PLEASE THINK CALMLY, BROTHER. IS THERE REALLY A NEED TO THROW THIS PALACE INTO CHAOS AGAIN WHEN IT HAS FINALLY BECOME PEACEFUL?

THE DOMESTIC AFFAIRS OF THE COURT ARE ALL RESPONSIBLY HANDLED BY THE TEN ATTENDANTS. TO DESPISE OR KILL THEM SOLELY BECAUSE OF THAT IS TO BREAK THE RESPECTED CUSTOMS OF THE HAN DYNASTY AND A DISCOURTEOUS ACT TO EMPEROR LING WHO RECENTLY PASSED AWAY.

THEN PLEASE DO NOT GATHER YOUR TROOPS UP IN ARMS AGAINST THE TEN ATTENDANTS.

I... I UNDER-STAND...

HEH HEH

WHAT DID SHE WISH TO SPEAK ABOUT?

OH, YUAN SHAO!

Y-YES...

WAS IT ABOUT THE TEN ATTENDANTS?

S-SHE ASKED ME TO FORGIVE THE TEN ATTENDANTS...

DID SHE ASK ABOUT OUR INTENTIONS?

YOU MUSTN'T GENERAL!

IF YOU KEEP LETTING THEM GO, THEY WILL BE THE DEATH OF GENERAL ONE DAY.

CAN'T YOU SEE THAT WHEN THEIR PLOT TO RUIN YOU WAS FOUND OUT, THEY FEIGNED INNOCENCE AND ASKED EMPRESS HE TO SAVE THEM!?

THAT IS WHY WE MUST TAKE ACTION NOW BEFORE IT IS TOO LATE!

GATHER ALL THE HEROES...?

WE MUST GATHER ALL THE FAMED WARRIORS AND HEROES IN THIS LAND UNDER YOUR BANNER TO WIPE THEM OUT!

ALRIGHT, SEND WORD TO ALL THE HEROES OF THE LAND!

I SEE... I ACTUALLY WAS THINKING OF THAT AS WELL!

SENDING OUT LETTERS TO ALL THE HEROES WILL ONLY ALERT THE REST OF THE COUNTRY TO THE TURBULENT STATE THE COURT IS IN RIGHT NOW.

FOOL... ALL HE NEEDS TO DO IS JUST GO TO THE PALACE AND SWEEP AWAY THE CORRUPT TEN ATTENDANTS...

IT IS LIKELY THAT THEY WILL SEIZE THIS OPPORTUNITY TO TAKE CONTROL OF THIS ENTIRE NATION ITSELF.

ONCE THIS NEWS IS OUT, THE AMBITIOUS WON'T QUIETLY SIT BY...

HAHAHA, IT SEEMS LIKE THINGS WI... BECOME MORE INTERESTING.

LIANGZHOU

FOR HIS LACKLUSTER PERFORMANCE DURING THE YELLOW SCARF REBELLION, HE SHOULD HAVE BEEN RIGHTLY DEMOTED AND PUNISHED

THIS WAS THE TERRITORY THAT DONG ZHUO WAS RULING OVER.

ARE YOU THE MESSENGER WHO BROUGHT ME THIS LETTER?

YES, SIR.

BUT BY BRIBING THE TEN ATTENDANTS, HE REMAINED A GOVERNOR AND A POWERFUL GENERAL LEADING 200,000 SOLDIERS

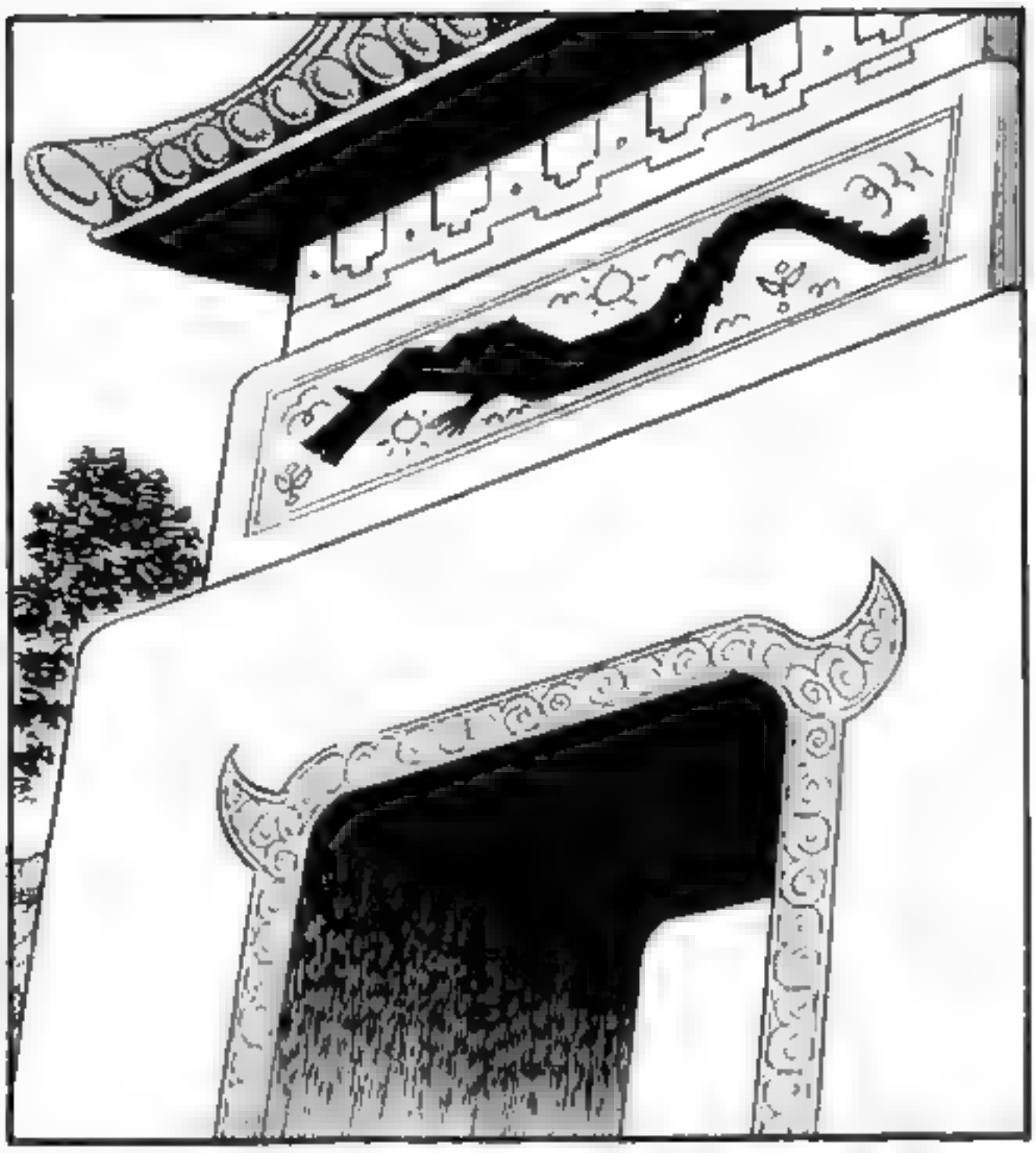
I NEVER REALIZED THAT THE COURT WAS IN SUCH A STATE...

YES SIR.

ALRIGHT, REPORT BACK THAT I SHALL HELP.

THINGS HAVE BECOME VERY INTERESTING INDEED.

HAHAHA, WHAT CAN THAT IGNORANT HE JIN ACCOMPLISH?



GENERAL, AFTER RECEIVING YOUR LETTER, I HAVE COME TO LEND AN AID.

HAHA, IT SEEMS THAT THE HEAVENS HAVE STARTED TO MOVE ACCORDING TO MY ORDERS.

IT IS BECAUSE OF THAT, I AM OPPOSED TO HIS COMING.

WHAT!?

YES, HIS ENORMOUS ARMY WILL BE OF GREAT SERVICE TO US AS WELL.

BY THE WAY, IS IT TRUE THAT YOU HAVE ALSO SENT A LETTER TO GENERAL DONG ZHUO?

HE IS SURE TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE CURRENT FRAGILE SITUATION OF THE COURT FOR HIS OWN PERSONAL GAINS.

DONG ZHUO IS A MAN WITH A BAD REPUTATION AND RUMORS SWIRLING ABOUT HIM. DO YOU REALLY BELIEVE THAT HE WILL DO AS YOU WISH, SIR?

YOU TWO ARE STILL NOT AWARE OF HOW THE WORLD WORKS!

SILENCE! IF I START DOUBTING EVERYTHING LIKE YOU TWO, THEN I WOULD NEVER GATHER ENOUGH MEN!

HALT!

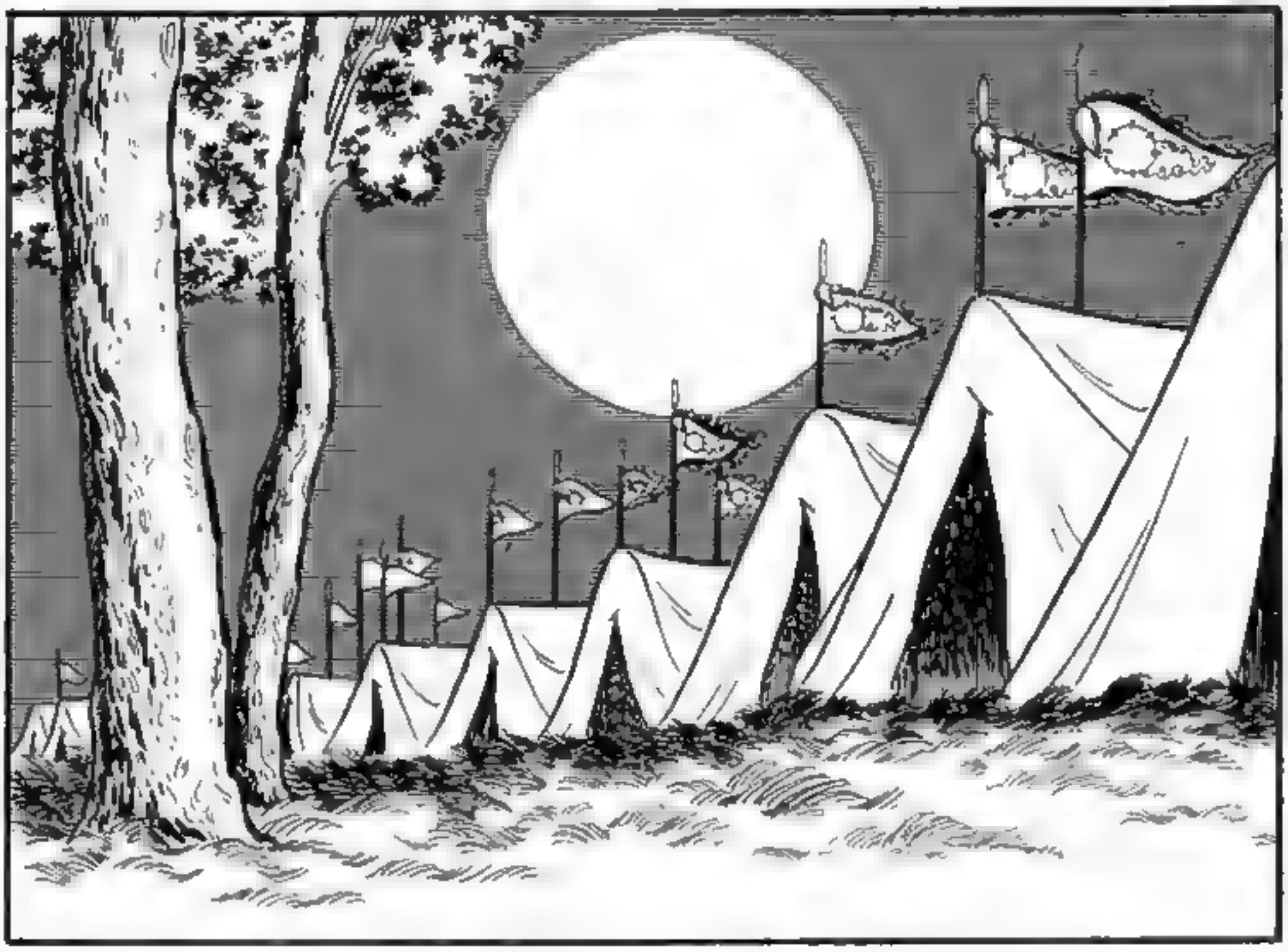
?

WE SHALL SET UP BASE HERE!

THIS PLACE WILL DO. WE WILL SET UP OUR BASE HERE.

GENERAL, THERE IS STILL SOME WAYS TO GO BEFORE REACHING LUOYANG.

TO SEE THE BEST COURSE OF ACTION WE SHOULD TAKE NEXT.
AND THEN WE WILL CALMLY OBSERVE THE SITUATION AT LUOYANG,



WHY WON'T HE COME HERE?

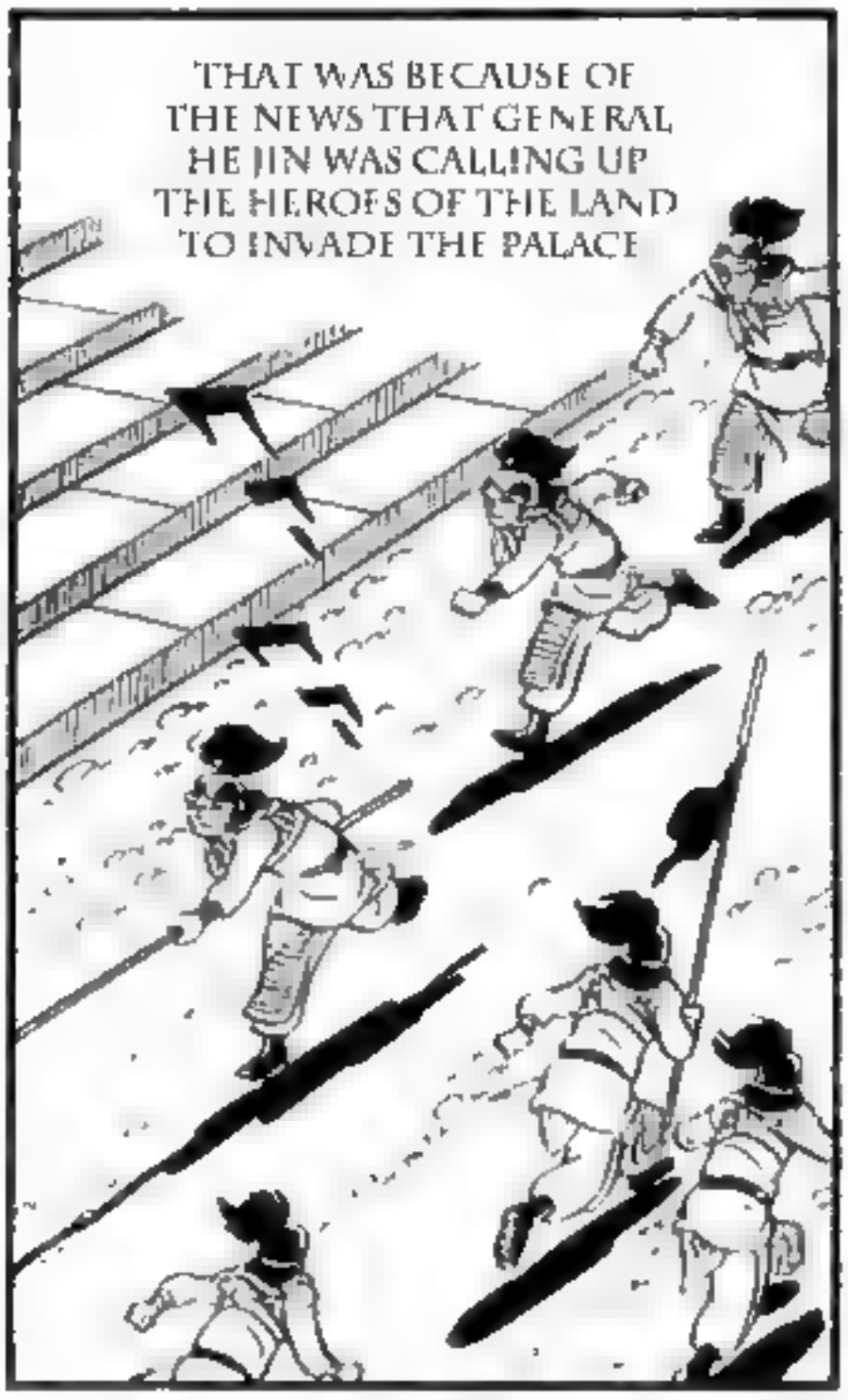
HE SAYS IT IS TO LET HIS TIRED SOLDIERS AND HORSES REST.

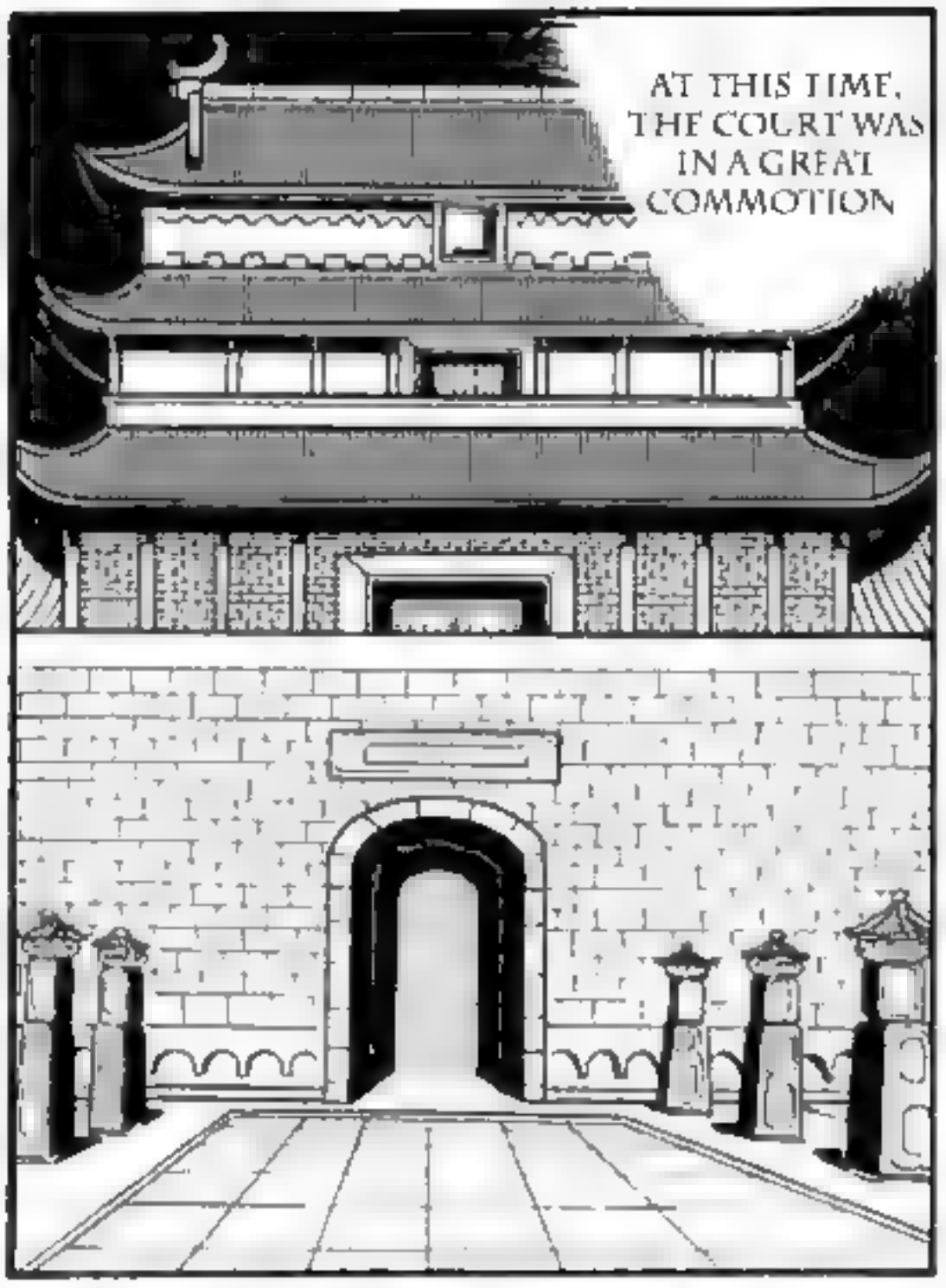
YES SIR.

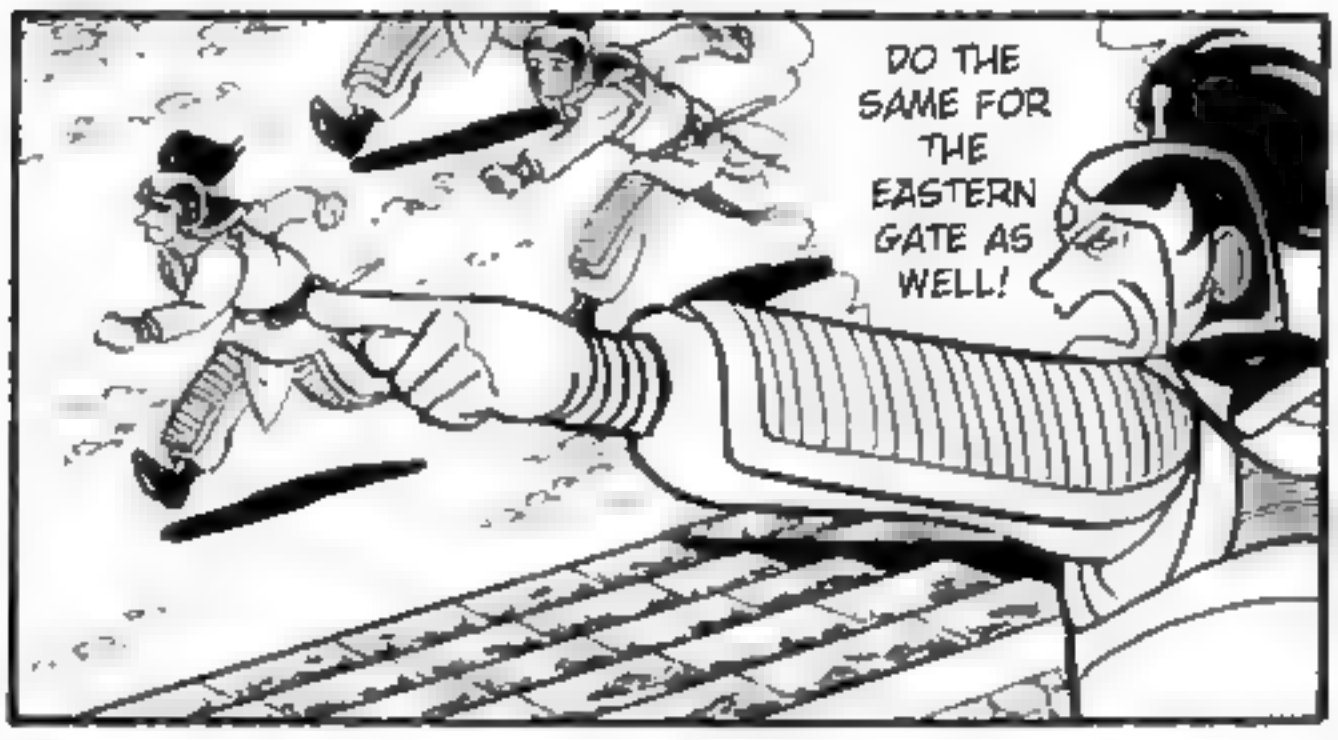
WHAT! DONG ZHUO HAS SET UP BASE AT MIANCHI!?

YES SIR.

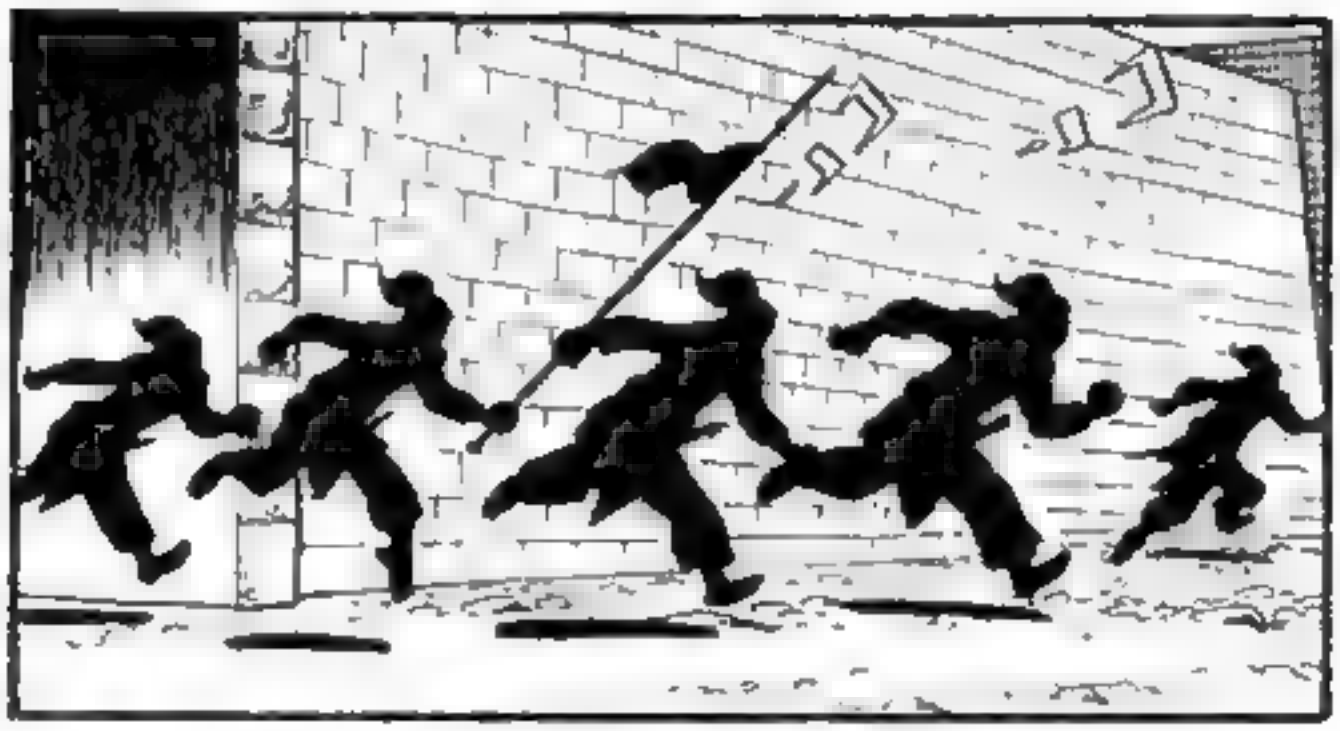
I CANNOT ACCEPT THAT. TELL HIM TO COME HERE AT ONCE!


THAT WAS BECAUSE OF THE NEWS THAT GENERAL HE JIN WAS CALLING UP THE HEROES OF THE LAND TO INVADE THE PALACE

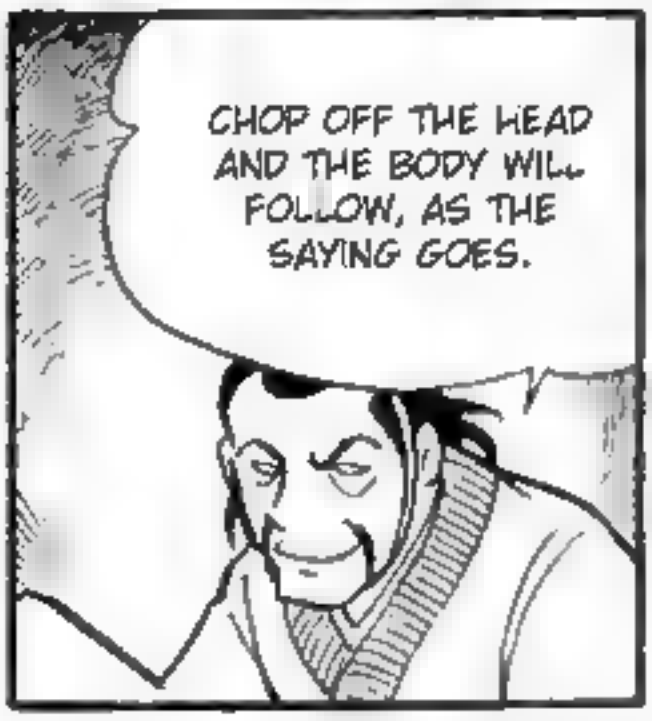

AT THIS TIME, THE COURT WAS IN A GREAT COMMOTION


DO THE SAME FOR THE EASTERN GATE AS WELL!

HAS THE WESTERN GATE BEEN FORTIFIED?



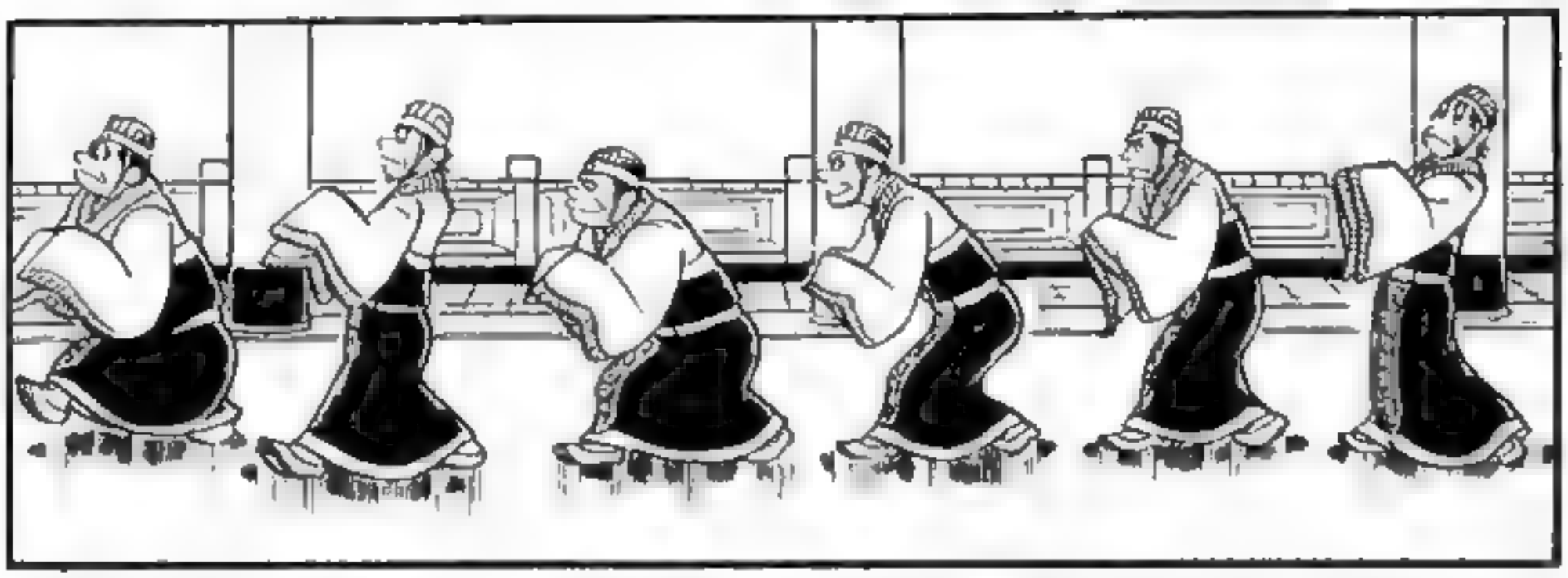
WHICH IS WHY WE MUST ASSASSINATE HE JIN QUICKLY!


CHOP OFF THE HEAD AND THE BODY WILL FOLLOW, AS THE SAYING GOES.

WE WOULD BE DESTROYED IN AN INSTANT!
EVEN WITH ALL THE SOLDIERS OF THE PALACE, WE WILL NOT STAND A CHANCE AGAINST THE HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS OF SOLDIERS THAT GENERAL HE JIN HAS GATHERED.

THEN LET US SEND A MESSENGER TO HE JIN SAYING...

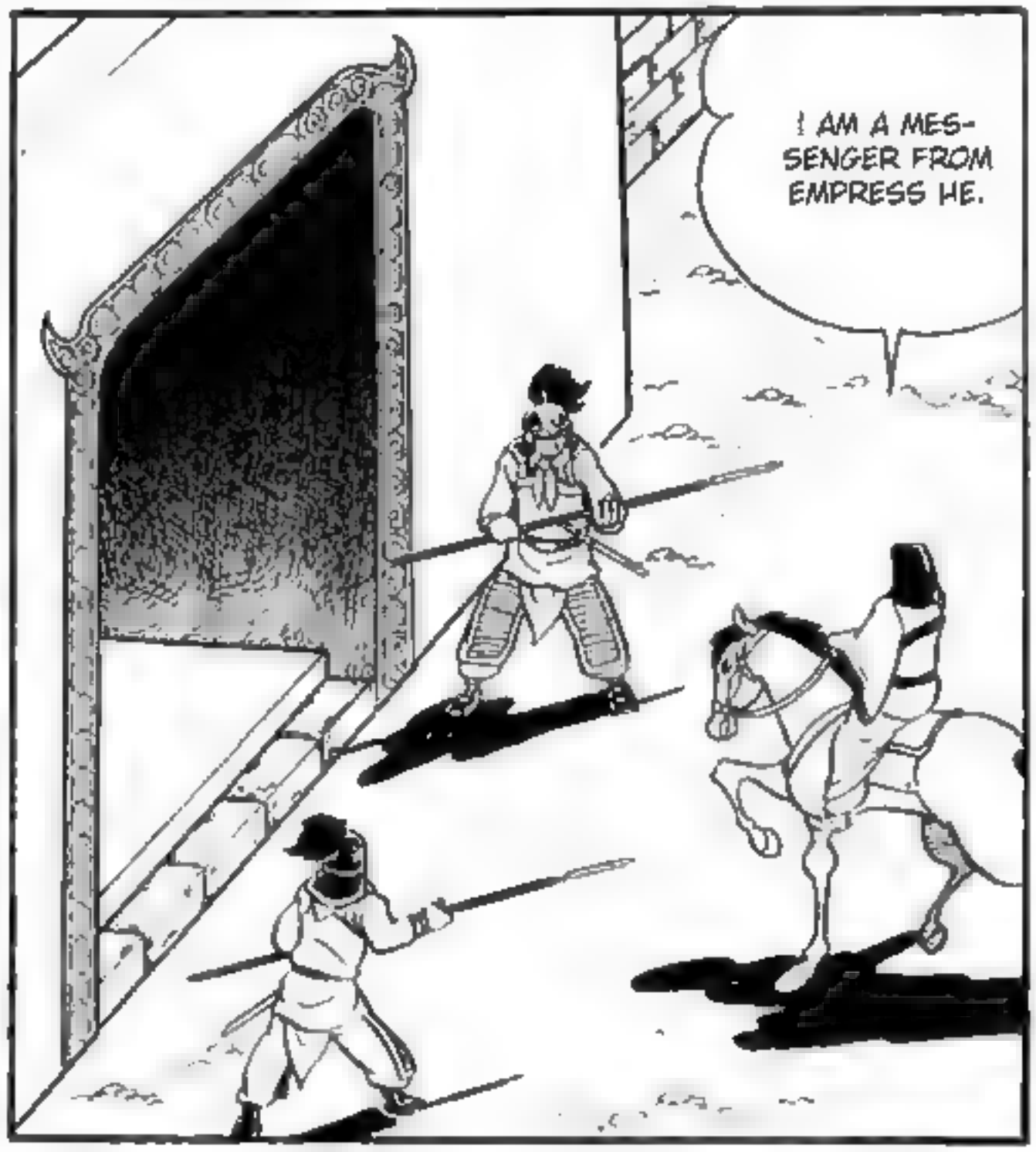
HMM, THAT SEEMS LIKE THE BEST PLAN.
ONCE WE KILL OFF HE JIN, WE'LL PURSUADE SOME OF THE OTHER GENERALS THAT HE JIN HAS CALLED UP TO JOIN OUR SIDE.



HALT!

カッ
カッ

ALRIGHT, YOU MAY PASS.


I AM A MES-SENGER FROM EMPRESS HE.

カッ

EMPRESS HE IS WORRIED OVER THE SUDDEN GATHERING OF SOLDIERS ACROSS THE LAND.

SHE WISHES TO DISCUSS THE ISSUE WITH THE GENERAL BEFORE THE SITUATION GROWS OUT OF HAND.

A MESSENGER FROM MY SISTER?

EMPRESS HE MIGHT BE THE RULER OF THIS COUNTRY FOR THE MOMENT BUT SHE IS MERELY AFRAID OF A LITTLE BLOODSHED BEING A WOMAN AND ALL.

HMM...

W-WHAT ARE YOU SAYING, GENERAL!?

ALRIGHT, I SHALL GO TALK TO HER AND PUT HER MIND AT EASE.

WORRY NOT. WHO DO YOU THINK I AM? IT IS I, GENERAL HE JIN, THE MAN WHO WILL RULE OVER THIS LAND. WHAT WOULD MY FOLLOWERS THINK IF I REFUSED TO SEE MY DEAR SISTER JUST BECAUSE I WAS AFRAID OF THE TEN ATTENDANTS?

GIVEN THE CURRENT SITUATION?

GENERAL, HOW CAN YOU EVEN THINK OF JUST WALTZING IN TO THE PALACE,

PREPARE MY CHARIOT.

ALRIGHT MEN, ACCOMPANY THE GENERAL!

DO AS YOU WISH.

THEN AT LEAST TAKE SOME GUARDS WITH YOU.

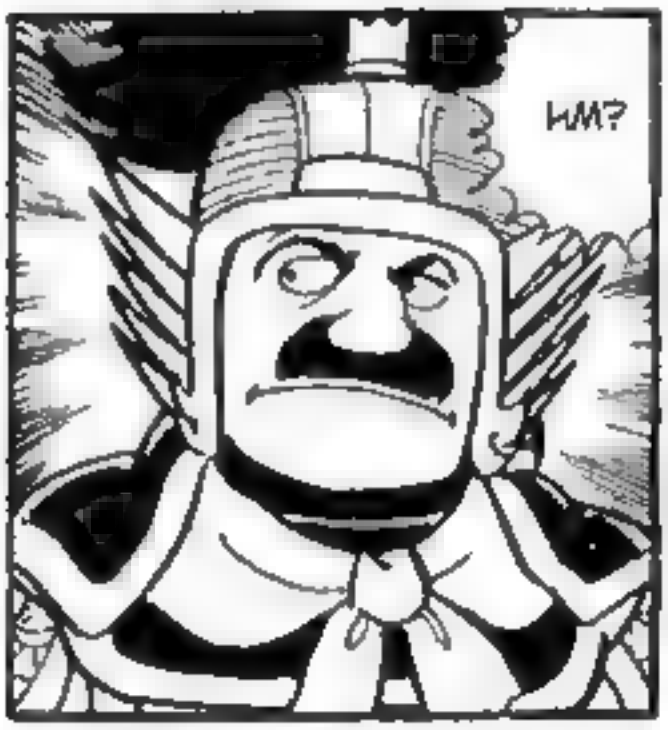
ガラガラガラ

OPEN THE GATES, IT IS I, GENERAL HE JIN!

OF COURSE I DO. I SHALL LEAVE MY GUARDS OUTSIDE THE GATE.

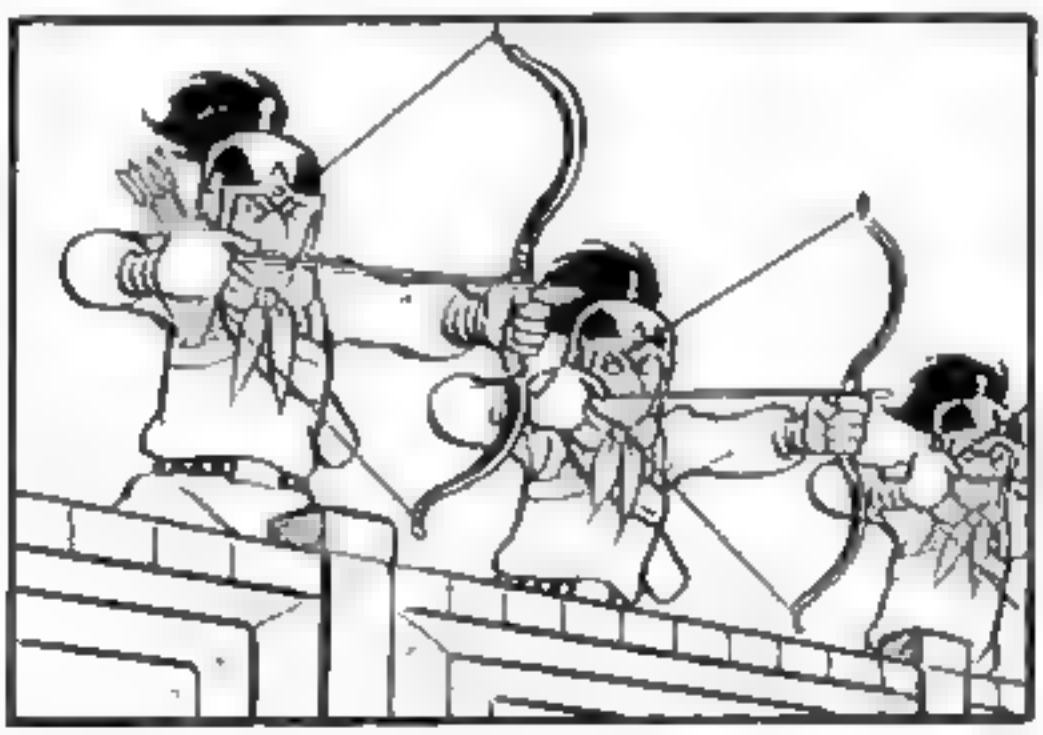
GENERAL, YOU DO KNOW OF THE PALACE RULES THAT FORBIDS GUARDS FROM ENTERING, OF COURSE?

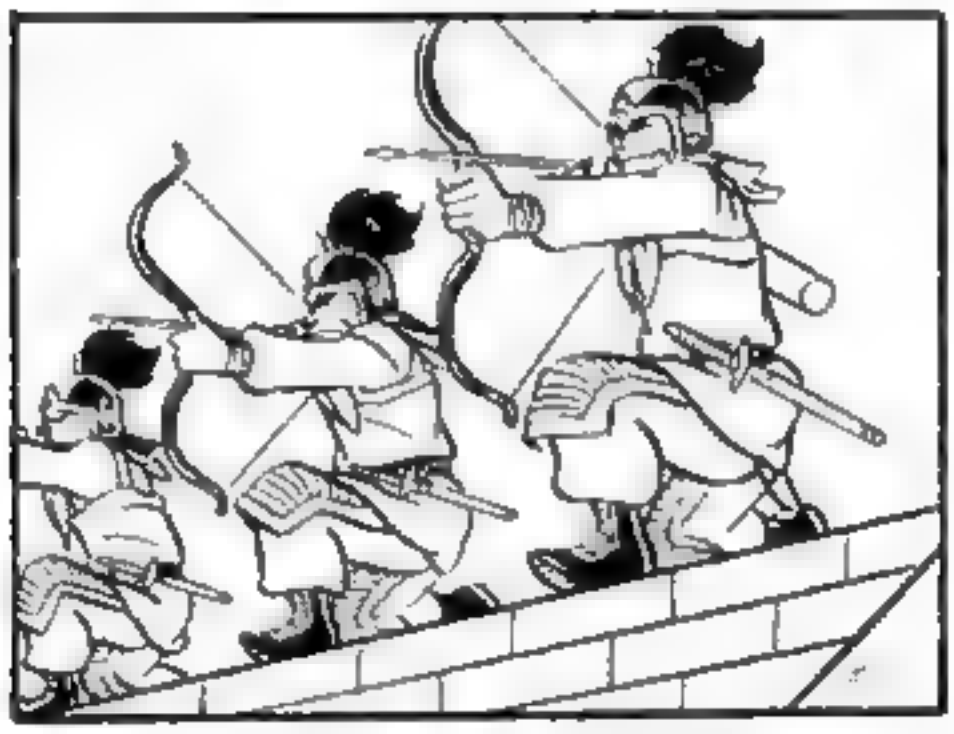
I SHALL ONLY TAKE TWO OF MY MEN.

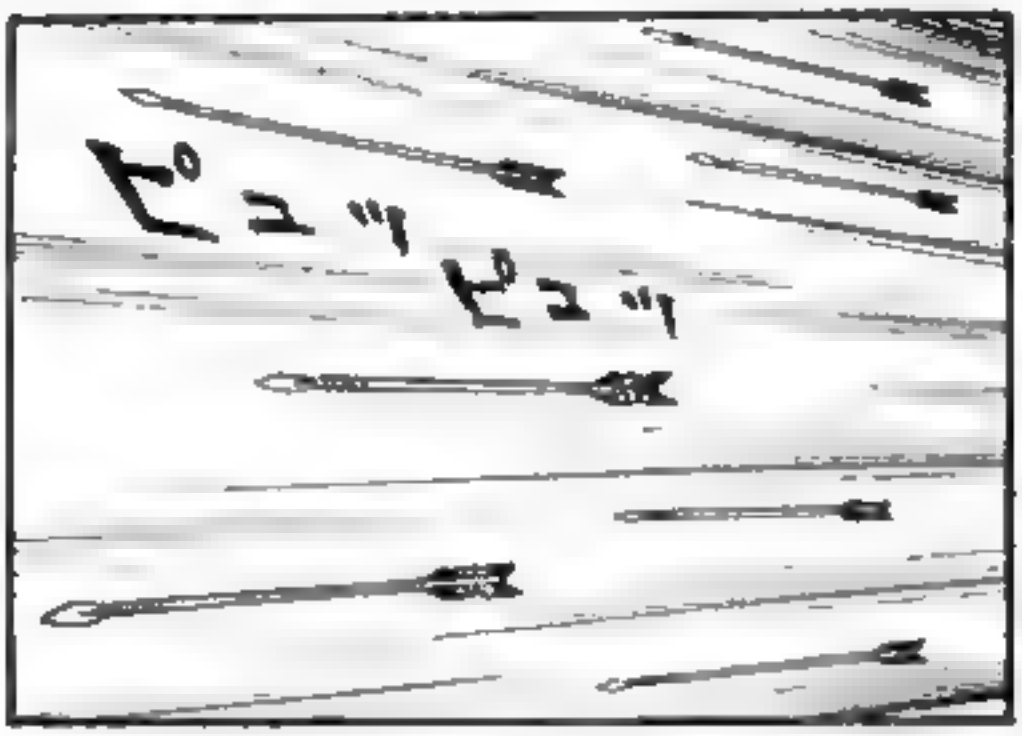

HM?

AH!

WHERE IS MY SISTER?







WHAT IS THE MEANING OF THIS!?

YOU'VE DECEIVED ME!!

GUH!

KILL HIM!

AGHI

HAHA, YOU MAY PRETEND TO BE A GENERAL BUT YOU ARE REALLY JUST A MERE COMMONER.

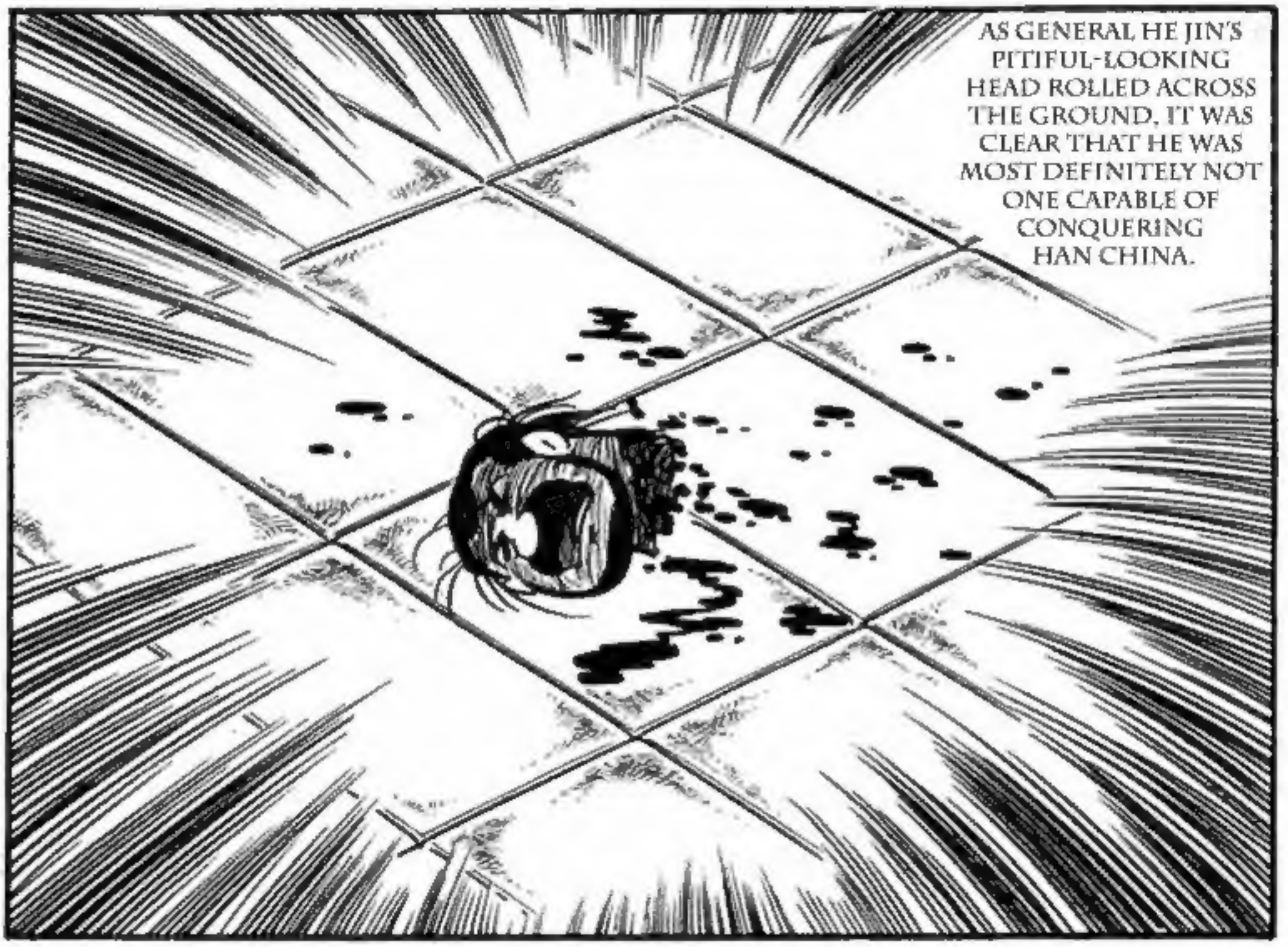
H-HELP!

SIR YUAN SHAO, SOMETHING IS HAPPENING INSIDE!

!

SILENCE!

WHAT IS GOING ON! OPEN THE GATES!


AS GENERAL HE JIN'S PITIFUL-LOOKING HEAD ROLLED ACROSS THE GROUND, IT WAS CLEAR THAT HE WAS MOST DEFINITELY NOT ONE CAPABLE OF CONQUERING HAN CHINA.

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横山 光輝

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